

THE POETICAL WORKS
OF
WILLIAM WORDSWORTH

WITH INTRODUCTION
BY
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Is thou indeed derive thy light from Heaven.
Then, to the measure of that heaven-born light,
Shine, Poet! in thy place, and be content:—
The stars pre-eminent in magnitude,
And they that from the zenith dart their beams
(Visible though they be to half the earth,
Though half a sphere be conscious of their brightness)
Are yet of no diviner origin.
No purer essence, than the one that burns,
Like an untended watch-fire, on the ridge
Of some dark mountain; or than those which seem
Humblv to hang, like twinkling winter lamps,
Among the branches of the leafless trees;
All are the undying offspring of one Sire:
Then, to the measure of the light vouchsafed,
Shine, Poet! in thy place and be content.

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WORDSWORTH

THE unity of Wordsworth's life of eighty years lies in its self-dedication to the work of a poet. Viewed from the spiritual side, few lives have been more remarkable; its external incidents have little in them of pictorial sequence or romance. Under the great poet in his nature lay a matter-of-fact Englishman of the north country. The course of his outward career was determined by the union in him of high poetic genius and plain good sense, and the latter served the former well.

The Wordsworth family can be traced back in Yorkshire to the reign of Edward III. The poet's grandfather migrated in the first half of the eighteenth century to Sockbridge in Westmoreland. His second son, John Wordsworth, became an attorney at Cockermouth, and at the age of twenty-five married Anne Cookson, daughter of a Penrith mercer. William Wordsworth, their second child, was born at Cockermouth on April 7, 1770. His brothers were three—Richard, who became a solicitor, John, who rose to be a captain in the merchant service, and Christopher, master of Trinity College, Cambridge, from 1820 until 1846. Not a little of the poet's genius, without its creative strength or its meditative depth, appears in his only sister, Dorothy, who was younger than William by somewhat less than two years. Brother and sister remained throughout life in the closest and dearest companionship.

"I was of a stiff, moody, and violent temper," writes Wordsworth, looking back upon his childhood; and chastisement only made him obstinate and defiant. His mother died when he was eight years old, and in her were lost the central light and love within his home. In the same year he was sent to the ancient grammar-school at Hawkshead, near Esthwaite Water. He boarded in the cottage of a village dame, Anne Tyson, enjoying much happy freedom, and receiving instruction at the school-house from a succession of masters, among them William Taylor, who appears idealized as the "Matthew" of his poems. He acquired some Greek and a sound knowledge of Latin, read for his own amusement *Don Quixote*, *Gil Blas*, *Gulliver*, the *Tale of a Tub*, and Fielding's novels; and being encouraged by his master to write English verse on the theme *The Summer Vacation*, he proceeded to compose for his own pleasure a long poem on the surrounding scenery and his boyish adventures. Here, and in his schoolboy days, the foundations of his mind were laid in that inter-

course with the external world—partly made up of animal joy, partly of imaginative wonder, awe, and delight—of which we read in the first two books of *The Prelude*. The boy was vigorous and hardy of body; he climbed, he boated, he fished, he skated; and through the mere physical rapture came impulses of deeper birth from the soul—impulses which did not die, but remained in the centre of his nature and helped to shape his whole moral being. Already that interpretation of the spiritual meanings of visible things, which is characteristic of all Wordsworth's highest work, had begun.

In the winter of 1783, Wordsworth's father, who never recovered from the loss of his wife, died. The sons were placed under the care of two uncles. Mr. Wordsworth's property consisted chiefly of a sum lent to Sir James Lowther, afterwards Earl Lonsdale, whose agent he had been. The debt was claimed, but without success; it remained unpaid until 1802, when liberal restoration was made by Lord Lonsdale's successor. In October, 1787, Wordsworth, then in his eighteenth year, was sent to reside as a student at St. John's College, Cambridge.

His life at Cambridge was not a life of study; he could not distribute the force of his mind into appointed channels; he had none of the ambition of a candidate for collegiate distinctions; he did not find the influences of the place inspiring for one of his temper. The memory, indeed, of great predecessors who had trod the courts stirred his imagination; he remembered Spenser's youth, and Milton's years at Christ's; he looked on Newton's sculptured face in the ante-chapel of Trinity--

The marble index of a mind for ever
Voyaging through strange seas of Thought, alone

But no living voice was a summons to his intellect; no living mind dominated or spurred his own. He yielded himself to the social enjoyments and casual pleasures of the day and hour, never seriously offending, but never concentrating his energies on an assigned task. During the week before he took his degree he occupied himself with reading *Clarissa Harlowe*. Yet he made certain scholarly gains; he became more familiar with the Latin poets, and read for his pleasure in Italian literature; and Cambridge was a miniature world, where he saw new forms of life that became a complement of his solitary communings with nature.

The long vacations were seasons of joy and inward growth. In the summer of 1788 he returned to his cherished vale of Esthwaite, to see all things with more instructed eyes and to find all as dear as in his boyhood. One moment remained for ever memorable, when walking home from a night of innocent mirth, he beheld the sun rise, and was startled into a higher joy, with peace at the heart of joy.

I made no vows, but vows
Were then made for me; bond unknown to me
Was given, that I should be, else sinning greatly,
A dedicated Spirit.

During the following summer he had for companions of his wanderings in the North of England his sister, Dorothy, and her and his dear friend Mary Hutchinson. His last college vacation was spent with his fellow-student, Robert Jones, in a pedestrian tour through France, Switzerland, and the Italian Lakes, returning by the Rhine. It was a season of high hope for revolutionary France. Wordsworth, as was natural to aspiring youth, was borne on the wave of political feeling, but as yet he made no study of the great phenomenon; it affected him as the awakening of nature in spring might affect him. The grandeur and beauty of mountain and lake moved him profoundly, and a record of his impressions may be found in the early poem *Descriptive Sketches*, and in the sixth book of *The Prelude*.

On taking his bachelor's degree in January, 1791, Wordsworth quitted Cambridge. Four months were spent in London, where the vast life of the city exalted his imagination with a sense of power and passion, and the endless variety of the streets occupied and amused his eye. He heard Burke speak in the House of Commons, and saw Mrs. Siddons on the stage. Yet even amid the multitudinous life of London, the spirit of nature, its solitudes, its inspiration, abode in his consciousness, bringing composure and harmony into his feelings. An excursion on foot through North Wales in company with his friend Jones occupied the summer. A memorable reminiscence of this tour—the description of a moonlight night on Snowdon—opens the last book of *The Prelude*. Wordsworth was now in his twenty-second year, and it was his duty to think of some means of obtaining a livelihood. For a moment he contemplated taking orders; again it occurred to him to write for the newspapers. Both designs yielded to the strong attractions of France in her days of revolution. Possibly a residence abroad would qualify him for obtaining a travelling tutorship. However this might be, he could not resist his desire, and before the close of November, 1791, he was on his way to Orleans.

In Paris he visited "each spot of old or recent fame," heard the orators of the Jacobin Club and of the Assembly, and chose for his relic a stone from the ruins of the Bastille. Yet the events of the time were still but half real for him. At Orleans he consorted with military officers of Royalist sympathies, and through their deep agitation he felt more truly the tumult and terror of revolution. But the new cause he believed was the cause of freedom and humanity. A heroic soldier of the approaching Republic, Michel Beaupuy, noble in character as one of Plutarch's men, became after a while Wordsworth's chief counsellor and close companion. Through him the doctrine of the Revolution and its purer passions laid hold of the young Englishman's intellect and heart. External nature was no longer supreme in his imagination; he thought first of the interests of man. When he came from Blois, where Beaupuy was stationed, to Paris, in October, 1792, the King was dethroned and imprisoned; the Prussians were flung back; the Republic had been decreed. Wordsworth felt, as it were, the ground rocking under him; he considered whether he should devote his life to the great cause. But a

return to England was necessary, and in December he was once again in the country of his birth.

A pamphlet in defence of the principles of the Revolution was written by Wordsworth in London (1793), but it remained unpublished. He occupied himself also in seeing through the press two poems—*An Evening Walk*, which is a careful study in verse of Lake country landscape, with its varying incidents, and *Descriptive Sketches*, a record of his earlier wanderings on the Continent. These pieces were published separately in quarto, and at a later date underwent careful revision. Neither poem exhibits in a high degree Wordsworth's characteristic power of interpreting nature, but each shows how steadily his eye was fixed on the object. The diction is in the manner of the eighteenth century, yet is often exact and vivid. In *Descriptive Sketches*, certain outbreaks of Revolutionary sentiment occur. Wordsworth's feeling towards the movement in France, however, gradually yielded to the strain of terrible events; his faith in the progress of the Revolution gave way; still he clung to its principles; but even these could not maintain their hold upon his mind. A painful moral confusion possessed his nature; he almost fell into despair. When recovery came, it was rather as a process of returning health than as the result of any train of reasoning. The influence of his sister helped his restoration; he still honoured man as man, but he believed less in political theories; he still cherished high hopes for humanity, but they were not the hopes of a doctrinaire. His earlier faith remained, but in a purified form.

In the summer of 1793 Wordsworth visited Salisbury Plain, Bristol, and the banks of the Wye. The tragic narrative poem, *Guilt and Sorrow*, begun at an earlier date, was now completed. But wanderings in beautiful scenery and verse-making were hardly the means to bring him a livelihood. He had thoughts of starting a periodical, to be named *The Philanthropist*. Unexpectedly in the early days of 1795 the way was cleared for his true work—that of a poet—by a dying friend's faith in his genius. Young Raisley Calvert, of Windybrow, near Keswick, placed Wordsworth in possession of a legacy of £900, declaring that he did so on public as well as personal grounds. By Calvert's foresight a difficult problem was solved: with his own small possessions and his sister's it would be possible for Wordsworth to live, devoting himself to poetry, and practising a strict economy. A young pupil, son of Basil Montagu, was placed under his care; the use of a country house at Racedown, Dorsetshire, was offered by a friend of Montagu; and thither in the autumn of 1795 came the brother and sister, and took up their abode.

His tragedy, *The Borderers*, was Wordsworth's chief occupation during the closing months of the year and the first half of 1796. Lacking dramatic efficiency, it is yet remarkable as a psychological study. A generous youth is betrayed into crime by the intellectual and moral sophistries of an elder man, who has employed his reason to kill within himself the natural instincts of the heart, and would form his disciple on his own model. The play was perhaps written in a

recoil from the doctrines of Godwin's *Political Justice*; when offered for representation at Covent Garden, it could not but be rejected. Before Wordsworth's residence at Racedown began he had probably made Coleridge's acquaintance; occasional intercourse in 1796 ripened into intimacy and friendship in June of the following year, when Coleridge visited his brother poet for the first time. He felt, as he says, "a little man" by Wordsworth's side; and he was charmed by the ardour of feeling and unerring sensibility to beauty of Wordsworth's sister. To attain closer companionship with their new friend, Wordsworth and Dorothy moved to Alfoxden, a large house surrounded by wooded grounds, and let on very moderate terms, in the neighbourhood of Nether Stowey and the Quantock Hills. Youth, friendship, genius, a beautiful environment united to make this a fortunate season. Many of Wordsworth's most radiant lyrics, many of his renderings of human passion, tender and strong in their humanity, belong to this period. The *Lyrical Ballads*, to which Coleridge contributed *The Ancient Mariner* and two or three other pieces, was planned; Coleridge's part was designed to show how truth to inward reality can support and purify work of an imaginative origin; Wordsworth's to show how imagination can purify and interpret the appearances and incidents of the actual world. The volume was published in 1798 by Joseph Cottle, of Bristol. It was republished, with a second volume wholly by Wordsworth, in 1800, and reached a fourth edition in 1805.

Before *Lyrical Ballads* was issued, Wordsworth, accompanied by his sister and Coleridge, had quitted England to reside for the winter in Germany. At Hamburg they parted, Coleridge proceeding to Ratzeburg, while William and Dorothy Wordsworth chose Goslar as their place of abode. Their solitude was deep, and the winter proved one of bitterest ice and snow. But the poet's heart and imagination at this period lived with peculiar intensity in his native land. No trace of German influence, unless it be in the ballad fragment *The Danish Boy*, appears in his verse. To Goslar belong the *Lucy* poems, the Quantock poem *Ruth*, the *Poet's Epitaph*, and *Lucy Gray*; and here it was that his poetical autobiography, *The Prelude* was designed and meditated.

Towards the close of April, 1799, passing through Göttingen, where Coleridge now stayed, the Wordsworths, after some wanderings in Germany, returned to England. A long visit was paid to the Hutchinsons at Sockburn-on-Tees; in the autumn Wordsworth rambled on foot through the Lake District, and finding at the Town End, Grasmere, a small house—Dove Cottage—vacant, his heart closed upon it as a home with fondest hope. A few days before Christmas he and his sister entered into possession of this dwelling-place, which still exists, and is now guarded in the general interest of those who honour the poet's memory. Here in 1800 visitors were welcomed—Coleridge with his wife; John Wordsworth, the sailor brother, a man of strong and gentle spirit, and a lover of what is best in literature; and Mary Hutchinson, their dear friend since childhood. In

this year the creative impulse came with might upon Wordsworth ; day by day the poems included in the second volume of *Lyrical Ballads*—*Michael, The Brothers, Hart-Leap Well*, and others—were wrought into form, and Wordsworth's deep, imaginative excitement often left him exhausted both in mind and body ; and now he enlarged the "Advertisement" of his volume of 1798 into the celebrated "Preface," which set forth his dominant convictions on the purposes of poetry and the nature of its vehicle of words. The manner of living at Dove Cottage was frugal to an extreme ; but in books there was a store of intellectual delights ; and mountains and lake enriched the senses and the heart with ever-present beauty. The household happiness was deepened, steadied and assured when on October 4, 1802, Mary Hutchinson became Wordsworth's wife. She brought him wise and tender affection, a gentle strength of soul, good sense with all the gifts of practical activity, and unerring sympathy in his work as a poet. No union of two lives was ever more rich in tranquil happiness.

Just before his marriage, Wordsworth and his sister spent a short time upon the northern coast of France. He had been deeply moved by the majesty of Milton's sonnets, and at Calais he wrote the earliest of his own series of lofty political poems in that form. The entire series deals with the course of public events in Europe from 1802 to the battle of Waterloo. The Revolutionary violences had alienated Wordsworth's sympathies from France ; the despotism and ambition of Napoleon completed his change of feeling ; he saw in England the armed champion of European liberty ; he entered ardently into the struggle on behalf of Spanish independence ; the cause to which he was attached seemed to him the good old cause to which he had given the enthusiasm of youth, but now the same enthusiasm was more wisely directed ; all the passion, all the courage of hope, all the sternness of his nature, found utterance in these poems that cheer and rally as with a trumpet's note.

In June, 1803, Wordsworth's first child, a son, was born. When the mother had fully recovered, Wordsworth left his home and enjoyed, in company with his sister, a six weeks' tour in Scotland. Coleridge was their fellow-traveller for a while, but at the Inversnaid ferry-house he parted from his friends, with a profession of ill-health. In Dorothy Wordsworth's exquisite journal the delights and incidents of their wanderings are recorded. At Dumfries they mourned by the grave of Burns ; at Lasswade they were cordially received by Scott, who for a while became their guide to places of interest ; they turned aside from Yarrow, though, as Wordsworth confesses, not altogether for the reason assigned in *his Yarrow Unvisited*. The poems suggested by this tour are illuminated by a spiritual radiance, which is softened by a tender human sympathy ; they are the earliest of Wordsworth's many itinerary poems.

Somewhat more than a year later sorrow of a profound kind for the first time became a part of Wordsworth's life. On February 5, 1805, his brother John, in command of an East Indiaman, was

lost with his ship off the coast near Weymouth. His behaviour in extremity was admirable, and when death became inevitable he accepted it with resignation to God's will. Wordsworth's grief was for a time overwhelming; then he threw himself upon work—the completion of his poetical autobiography; and by degrees his sorrow was chastened, mingling with all his feelings and influencing all his work as a gain that had been wrought out of loss. The radiance of his joy was henceforth tempered; the sense of duty as a blessed control was fortified; a deep distress had humanized his soul. The *Elegiac Stanzas suggested by a Picture of Pele Castle* tells of this discipline of pain. In the *Ode, Imitations of Immortality* we recognize its power. A veiled memorial of his brother, to which is added something drawn from another heroic sailor—Lord Nelson—may be discovered in *The Happy Warrior*.

In his work as a poet Wordsworth found sustenance during his trial, and children were born to gladden his home. In 1806 he was the father of two sons and a daughter—John (his first-born), Dorothy (1804), and Thomas (1806). Dove Cottage proved too small for his growing needs, and for the winter of 1806–1807 he gladly accepted the loan of the farm-house of Colcorton, Leicestershire, from his wealthy friend—a landscape painter of some repute—Sir George Beaumont.²¹ Here was written a poem in which the spirit of chivalry mingles with a sentiment for nature and humanity peculiarly his own—the *Song at the Feast of Brougham Castle*; and here he read aloud for Coleridge the later books of *The Prelude*, awakening in his friend's heart a passion of self-pity, a throng of reviving hopes, and a great joy that at least one of the two poets had been wholly loyal to his allotted task. Two slender volumes of *Poems* were published by Wordsworth in 1807; no nobler gift of verse had appeared in England since Milton wrote; it was received by the critics with derision; but the writer was supported amid such discouragement by his "faith in the whispers of the lonely Muse." "These poems," he wrote to Lady Beaumont, "will, in their degree, be efficacious in making men wiser, better, and happier." A century has given its confirmation to Wordsworth's just self-confidence.

Part of the summer of 1807 was spent in Yorkshire, where Wordsworth for the first time saw the remains of Bolton Priory, and visited the striding-place where young Romilly leaped and was lost. Having gathered the needful material of history and tradition, he composed at Stockton-on-Tees before the close of the year a considerable part of his poem connected with the Priory—*The White Doe of Rylstone*. It remained unpublished until 1815. In narrative and descriptive power *The White Doe* is by no means deficient, but it is far less a poem of chivalric action, such as Scott might have written, than a record of spiritual events. The subject essentially belongs to Wordsworth's own experience, for it deals before all else with the purification, or, one may say, the sublimation of sorrow. Emily, the heroine, abides the shock of pain and grief, and finally obtains an exalted triumph. Such a poem could not compete in popularity

with the *Giaours* and *Corsairs* which had taken the public by storm ; but it bears a gift of healing to those who suffer as effectually at the present day as when it was first put forth.

In the summer of 1808 Wordsworth removed to a house—Allan Bank—just built under the northern flank of Silverhowe, on the way from Grasmere into Easedale. Here a little daughter, whom they named Catherine, was born in September, and in May, 1810, Wordsworth's last child, William. Coleridge, engaged during 1809-1810 on his periodical *The Friend*, was for a long period domesticated with his old friends ; and for a time De Quincey was a visitor. To *The Friend* Wordsworth contributed some poems and a remarkable letter of *Advice to the Young*. He was chiefly occupied with *The Excursion* (published in 1814) ; but deeply interested as he was in the affairs of Spain, he could not forbear uttering his mind in a long prose pamphlet (1809) suggested by the Convention of Cintra, in which passionate meditation is expressed in a style of weighty eloquence. Its general thesis, that the hopes for the Spaniards resided not in military armaments or diplomatic negotiations, but in the moral spirit of an indignant people, is applied to show the injustice, and therefore the folly, of Wellesley's arrangement with the French. The pamphlet was delayed too long, and it fell upon unheeding ears. A little later, in 1810, another remarkable piece of prose, but of a different kind, appeared—Wordsworth's introduction to Wilkinson's *Views of Cumberland, Westmoreland, and Lancashire*, afterwards enlarged and separately published as a guide to the English lakes. It is especially interesting as exhibiting Wordsworth's intellectual grasp of all those features of landscape and varying aspects of nature interpreted in poetry by his imagination and passions.

His residence at Allan Bank terminated in the spring of 1811, when the landlord required the house for his own use. A temporary resting-place, far from satisfactory, was found at the Parsonage, Grasmere, which stood until lately close to the churchyard. In 1812 it became a house of grief ; on June 4 of that year little Catherine, a child of sweet and gay temper, sickened and died. The lines beginning " Loving she is and tractable though wild," tell of her innocent mirth ; the sonnet *Surprised by Joy* records her father's abiding sorrow. Six months later little Thomas lay beside her in the churchyard. A house haunted by such memories of anguish could not be endured. Rydal Mount, standing above Rydal Mere, on the slope of Nab's Scar, fell vacant ; it was in every way suitable for a poet's home ; thither the household was transferred in the spring of 1813. It was Wordsworth's final home for life.

Through the influence of Lord Lonsdale, Wordsworth was appointed, in March of the same year distributor of stamps for the county of Westmoreland ; the value of the post was said to be £400 a year ; the duties were not over-burdensome, and they were lightened by the help of a clerk. Thus happily provided for, Wordsworth applied a portion of his time to preparing his son John for the University. In reading the classics again, some of their spirit passed into his own

verse. A rare dignity of expression, a majesty of versification, a new grace of style, are united in such poems as *Laodamia* and *Dion* with gravity of thought and restrained passion. A few pieces of a different kind were suggested by Wordsworth's second Scottish tour, that of the summer of 1814. His wife and her sister Sara were his companions, and, guided by the Ettrick Shepherd, they now looked with bodily eyes on Yarrow, the stream of romance. All the spirit of the place has passed into the poem *Yarrow Visited*. A third of Wordsworth's Yarrow poems, and one touched by sadness which is yet courageously resisted, belongs to his old age, when in 1831 he visited Scott, then broken in health and about to seek vainly for restoration in Italy.

In 1814 appeared Wordsworth's narrative and philosophical poem *The Excursion*, itself designed as part of a still vaster poetical work, *The Recluse*, in which the poet meant to set forth at large his views on man, nature, and society. The history of the formation of his mind in *The Prelude* was to serve as an introduction to the whole; the first and third parts of *The Recluse* were to consist chiefly of meditations in the author's own person: in the intermediate part, *The Excursion*, something of a dramatic form, adapting itself to philosophical dialogue, appears. Besides *The Excursion* and *The Prelude* only a single book of the first part of *The Recluse* was ever written. *The Excursion* has level tracts, but also illuminated heights of vision. It is a profound and passionate study of the bases on which rest man's faith and hope and charity, and the sanity and joy which spring from these. In it Wordsworth speaks as a son of consolation; it is a work of thought indeed, but the thought had grown and matured through a personal experience. *The Excursion* was followed in 1815 by *The White Doe*, and by the first collected edition of Wordsworth's miscellaneous poems, in which he adopted a classification carefully considered, and adhered to in all future editions which have his authority. It had reference partly to the progress of human life from childhood to old age, death, and immortality; partly to the dominant faculties of the soul which are represented in his various writings. So much of the author's mind entered into this arrangement that it cannot without serious loss be disturbed.

A small sheaf of poems, including the *Thanksgiving Ode* for Waterloo and the restoration of peace, appeared in 1816; and three years later was published a long lyrical ballad of 1799, *Peter Bell*, in which with some errors of grotesqueness and ungainly vivacity there is a masterly study of the wild lover's character, and a passionate inquisition into strange processes of the human spirit. It was ridiculed, but it was read, and indeed few of its author's poems are more characteristic of his genius in its earlier development. *The Waggoner*, written in 1805 and dedicated to Charles Lamb, followed; it does not pretend to greatness and profundity, but it shows as much geniality and gaiety of temper as were possible to Wordsworth, and its vivid topographical associations make it dear to all who cherish memories of the district of the Lakes.

During several years Wordsworth was engaged from time to time on a series of sonnets connected with the course of the river Duddon from its source to the point where it is lost in the sea. The sonnets, with other miscellaneous poems, were issued in 1820. They are eminent among his writings for grace, for tranquil beauty, and delicate play of fancy. A second sequence of sonnets, those which deal with ecclesiastical history, and especially with the history of the Church of England, are less spontaneous, but they maintain the level of a high table-land, from which occasionally rises an altitude of contemplative passion. The design was formed in the winter of 1820, and the volume, entitled *Ecclesiastical Sketches*, appeared two years later, but additions were made almost to the date when Wordsworth ceased to write. In earlier days his spiritual life had been fed by the influences of nature and by his own exultant feelings. Gradually he came to value aright the power for good of organised institutions, rites, and ceremonies; he felt himself more than formerly a member of a devout society; an historical feeling united itself with his private and personal life of the soul. If something was lost there was a compensating gain. Unhappily that strong creative impulse which makes artistic work inevitable was often lacking in the ecclesiastical sonnets; he sometimes sought for his subjects rather than was sought and compelled by them.

A delightful tour of 1820 to Switzerland and the Italian lakes, in company with his wife, his sister, and some chosen friends, gave its origin to another volume of verse published in 1822—*Memorials of a Tour on the Continent*. The power of Wordsworth's genius had unmistakably begun to ebb; but sometimes there is strength and often there is beauty in the reflux wave. The illumination of morning and of noon had passed away; but a clarity remains in the evening sky, and this is sometimes thrilled with some beautiful surprise of radiance. No one who values Wordsworth's work aright can regard with light esteem the best of his later poems; they give us something which we cannot find elsewhere, and make us feel how beautiful and harmonious even a decline may be. Many of these poems of his elder days were suggested by travel. In 1827 Sir George Beaumont died, and left by his will to Wordsworth an annuity of £100, to be spent on a yearly tour. Belgium, the Rhine, Holland, Wales, Ireland, Scotland, were at various times visited. In 1837 Wordsworth for the first time saw Florence and Rome; at Rome no object moved him so deeply as a pine-tree, seen against the evening sky, which had been preserved from destruction at Beaumont's entreaty. The traveller was now not far from seventy, and his strength and spirits were not always equal to the excitement of such wanderings. He returned by Venice and Munich, and was glad to rest again in his beloved home at Rydal.

Wordsworth's latest volumes of verse were *Yarrow Revisited and other Poems* (1835), and *Poems, Chiefly of Early and Late Years* (1842), in which the tragedy of *The Borderers* was first printed. His conscientious sense of a craftsman's duty in literature led him to

frequent revision of his work, and on the whole the gains were great. For the stereotyped edition of 1836 the alterations were carried too far, but in 1845 Wordsworth, in those instances where it was desirable, with a few exceptions, reverted to the earlier readings. There can be no question, speaking generally, that the latest text is also the best text. Such work as this was like setting his house in order and devising his gift to the world before the approaching end. And indeed there were sufficient tokens that the end could not be far off. Many who were dear to Wordsworth had passed away or were encompassed with the infirmities of old age. His sister was a confirmed invalid, weakened in intellect. Scott, Coleridge, Lamb, Hogg, Felicia Hemans, Southey, followed each other in quick succession "from sunshine to the sunless land." Friends, indeed, of a younger generation loved and revered Wordsworth, and the honours of old age were his. In 1839 he received, amid enthusiastic plaudits, the honorary D.C.L. of Oxford. Four years later he was appointed Poet Laureate, with a dispensation from the irksome task of official odes, and was granted a Civil List pension of £300 per annum. He had resigned his position as distributor of stamps, and was succeeded in the office by his son William.

The slope towards death would have been gentle but for one great sorrow. Wordsworth's beloved daughter Dora, married in 1841 to Edward Quillinan, a man of culture and literary tastes, died in the summer of 1847. To her father the blow was overwhelming; he submitted with devout resignation, but he could not recover his accustomed cheerfulness. During the remaining years he was silent as a poet, and waited for the end. It came in the spring of 1850. On March 10th of that year he returned from church chilled by the north-east wind; ten days later he was dangerously ill; bronchial and pleuritic inflammation was fully developed. For a month he lingered in view of death. On April 20th Mrs. Wordsworth, announcing to him the verdict of the physicians, said, gently, "William, you are going to Dora." He made no reply, and it was doubted whether he had heard the words. "More than twenty-four hours afterwards one of his nieces came into the room, and was drawing aside the curtain of his chamber, and then, as if awakening from a quiet sleep, he said, 'Is that Dora?'" On the 23rd, exactly as the cuckoo-clock was striking the hour of noon, he calmly breathed his last. His body was laid to rest, near the bodies of his children, in Grasmere churchyard. "He desired," wrote his nephew and biographer, "no splendid tomb in a public mausoleum. He reposes, according to his own wish, beneath the green turf, among the daisies of Grasmere, under the sycamores and yews of a country churchyard, by the side of a beautiful stream, amid the mountains which he loved."

In person Wordsworth was tall, and neither massive nor meagre. His features were strongly marked, indicative of a strenuous energy of mind. Hazlitt, describing his appearance in youth, speaks of "a severe, worn presence of thought about his temples, a fire in his

eye (as if he saw more in objects than the outward appearance), . . . cheeks furrowed by strong purpose and feeling." The mouth, says De Quincey, "composed the strongest feature in his face." Constant exposure to the open air hardened the surface of the skin, and "the secret fire of a temperament too fervid" caused him to look older than his years. Of many portraits, that by Haydon, which represents him standing upon Helvellyn, best records the brooding power that sometimes came into his face; the droop of the head, weighed down by imaginative thought and feeling, is true and characteristic. An idealised portrait in words, written by Wordsworth himself, may be found in the first four stanzas of his verses *Written in my Pocket-Copy of Thomson's "Castle of Indolence."* Most of his poetry came into being in the open-air; desk-work or any use of the pen was irksome to him, and often he dictated to his wife or sister as amanuensis. His conversation was earnest and weighty with thought; he could be genial with his friends, but he did not conceal his strength of moral indignation against what seemed to him evil or mean. In his rural neighbours he took a kindly interest, but he did not become an easy companion to them. His self-esteem was high, not the self-esteem of vanity, but that of one who recognises his own greatness as if it were an objective fact, like the greatness of a mountain height; towards all that is above the human soul he looked upward in aspiration and deep humility.

"The essential characteristic of Wordsworth's poetry at its best," I have written elsewhere, "is the essential characteristic of Wordsworth's genius—the organic, vital unity in it of sense and spirit, of thought and feeling, of reason and imagination, of reality and ideality, of calm receptiveness and creative energy, of passion and conscience, of ardour and serenity, of freedom and obedience to law." Powers which commonly war against one another in our nature he reduced or restored to harmony; more truly than any other great poet of the century he may be called a reconciler. He brings to us the gift of peace; but at the heart of this peace are rapture and power.

EDWARD DOWDEN.

PUBLISHERS' NOTE.

THIS edition of Wordsworth's Poetical Works contains every poem published by the author, and the text here followed is that which he finally revised for the last collected edition issued in his lifetime. The author's own arrangement of the poems has been followed throughout save for the transference of the "Additional Poems" which were formerly printed after the Notes, Appendix, and Prefaces, to the concluding page of the poems.

To these "Additional Poems" have been added the verses which formerly appeared at the end of the long prose "Postscript" of 1835. The famous "Preface" with the "Appendix," "Essay," and "Preface to the edition of 1815" are printed in their entirety, together with a somewhat abbreviated version of the "Notes."

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POEMS

By WILLIAM WORDSWORTH

POEMS WRITTEN IN YOUTH

Of the Poems in this class, "THE EVENING WALK" and "DESCRIPTIVE SKETCHES" were first published in 1793. They are reprinted with some alterations that were chiefly made very soon after their publication.

This notice, which was written some time ago, scarcely applies to the Poem, "Descriptive Sketches," as it now stands. The corrections, though numerous, are not, however, such as to prevent its retaining with propriety a place in the class of juvenile Pieces.

1836.

EXTRACT

FROM THE CONCLUSION OF A POEM, COMPOSED IN ANTICIPATION OF LEAVING SCHOOL

DEAR native regions, I foretell,
From what I feel at this farewell,
That, wheresoe'er my steps may tend,
And whensoe'er my course shall end,
If in that hour a single tie
Survive of local sympathy,
My soul will cast the backward view.
The longing look alone on you.

Thus, while the Sun sinks down to rest
Far in the regions of the west,
Though to the vale no parting beam
Be given, not one memorial gleam.
A lingering light he fondly throws
On the dear hills where first he rose.

1786.

II

WRITTEN IN VERY EARLY YOUTH

CALM is all nature as a resting wheel.
The kine are conched upon the dewy
grass;

The horse alone, seen dimly as I pass,
Is cropping audibly his later meal:
Dark is the ground; a slumber seems to
steal

O'er vale, and mountain, and the star-
less sky.

Now, in this blank of things, a harmony,
Home-felt, and home-created, comes to
heal

That grief for which the senses still
supply

Fresh food, for only then, when memory
Is hushed, am I at rest. My Friends!
restrain

Those busy cares that would allay my
pain:

Oh! leave me to myself, nor let me feel
The officious touch that makes me droop
again.

III

AN EVENING WALK

ADDRESSED TO A YOUNG LADY

General Sketch of the Lakes—Author's regret
of his youth which was passed amongst them
—Short description of Noon—Cascade—
Noon-tide Retreat—Precipice and sloping
Lights—Face of Nature as the Sun declines—
Mountain-farm, and the Cock—Slate-quarry
—Sunset—Superstition of the Country con-
nected with that moment—Swans—Female
Beggar—Twilight-sounds—Western Lights
—Spirits—Night—Moonlight—Hope—Night-
sounds—Conclusion.

FAR from my dearest Friend, 'tis mine to
rove

Through bare grey dell, high wood, and
pastoral cove:

Where Derwent rests, and listens to the
roar

That stuns the tremulous cliffs of high
Lodore;

Where peace to Grasmere's lonely island
leads,

To willowy hedge-rows, and to emerald
meads;

Leads to her bridge, rude church, and
cottage grounds,

Her rocky sheepwalks, and her woodland
bounds:

Where, undisturbed by winds, Winander¹
sleeps

'Mid clustering isles, and holly-sprinkled
steeps:

Where twilight glens endear my Esth-
waite's shore,

And memory of departed pleasures, more.

¹ These lines are applicable only to the
middle part of that lake.

Fair scenes, erewhile, I taught, a happy child,
 The echoes of your rocks my carols wifd :
 The spirit sought not then, in cherished sadness,
 A cloudy substitute for failing gladness.
 In youth's keen eye the livelong day was bright,
 The sun at morning, and the stars at night,
 Alike, when first the bittern's hollow bill
 Was heard, or woodcocks¹ roamed the moonlight hill.

In thoughtless gaiety I coursed the plain,
 And hope itself was all I knew of pain ;
 For then, the inexperienced heart would beat
 At times, while young Content forsook her seat,
 And wild Impatience, pointing upward, showed,
 Through passes yet unreached, a brighter road.
 Alas ! the idle tale of man is found
 Depicted in the dial's moral round :
 Hope with reflection blends her social rays
 To gild the total tablet of his days ;
 Yet still, the sport of some malignant power,
 He knows but from its shade the present hour.

But why, ungrateful, dwell on idle pain ?
 To show what pleasures yet to me remain,
 Say, will my Friend, with reluctant ear,
 The history of a poet's evening hear ?

When, in the south, the wan noon,
 brooding still,
 Breathed a pale stean' around the glaring hill,
 And shades of deep-embattled clouds
 were seen,
 Spotting the northern cliffs with lights
 between ;
 When crowding cattle, checked by rails
 that make
 A fence far stretched into the shallow
 lake,
 Lashed the cool water with their restless tails,
 Or from high points of rock looked
 out for fanning gales ;
 When school-boys stretched their length
 upon the green ;

¹ In the beginning of winter, these mountains are frequented by woodcocks, which in dark nights retire into the woods.

And round the broad-spread oak, a glimmering scene,
 In the rough fern-clad park, the herded deer.
 Shook the still-twinkling tail and glancing ear ;
 When horses in the sunburnt intake² stood,
 And vainly eyed below the tempting flood,
 Or tracked the passenger, in mute distress,
 With forward neck the closing gate to press—
 Then, while I wandered where the huddling rill
 Brightens with water-breaks the hollow ghyll³
 As by enchantment, an obscure retreat
 Opened at once, and stayed my devious feet.
 While thick above the rill the branches close,
 In rocky basin its wild waves repose,
 Inverted shrubs, and moss of gloomy green,
 Cling from the rocks, with pale wood-weeds between ;
 And its own twilight softens the whole scene,
 Save where aloft the subtle sunbeams shine
 On withered briars that o'er the crags recline ;
 Save where, with sparkling foam, a small cascade
 Illumines, from within, the leafy shade ;
 Beyond, along the vista of the brook,
 Where antique roots its bustling course o'erlook,
 The eye reposes on a secret bridge⁴
 Half grey, half shagged with ivy to its ridge ;
 There, bending o'er the stream, the listless swain
 Lingers behind his disappearing wain.
 --Did Sabine grace adorn my living line,
 Blandusia's praise, wild stream, should yield to thine !
 Never shall ruthless minister of death
 'Mid thy soft glooms the glittering steel unsheath ;
 No goblets shall, for thee, be crowned with flowers,

² The won' intake is local, and signifies a mountain-inclosure.

³ Ghyll is also, I believe, a term confined to this country : ghyll, and dingle, have the same meaning.

⁴ The reader who has made the tour of this country, will recognise, in this description, the features which characterise the lower waterfall in the grounds of Rydal.

No lid with piteous outcry thrill thy
hollows ;

The mystic shapes that by thy margin
roave

A more benignant sacrifice approve—

A mind, that, in a calm, angelic mood

Of happy wisdom, meditating good,

Beholds, of all from her high powers
required,

Much done, and much designed, and

more desired,—

Harmonious thoughts, a soul by truth
refined,

Entire affection for all human kind.

Dear Brook, farewell ! Tomorrow's
noon again

Shall hide me, wooing long thy wildwood
strain ;

But now the sun has gained his western
road,

And eve's mild hour invites my steps
abroad.

While, near the midway cliff, the
silvered kite

In many a whistling circle wheels her
flight ;

Slant watery lights, from parting clouds,
apace

Travel along the precipice's base ;

Cheering its naked waste of scattered
stone,

By lichens grey, and scanty moss, o'er-
grown ;

Where scarce the foxglove peeps, or
thistle's beard ;

And restless stone-chat, all day long, is
heard.

How pleasant, as the sun declines, to
view

The spacious landscape change in form
and hue !

Here, vanish, as in mist, before a flood
Of bright obscurity, hill, lawn, and wood ;

There, objects, by the searching beams
betrayed,

Come forth, and here retire in purple
shade ;

Even the white stems of birch, the
cottage white,

Soften their glare before the mellow
light ;

The cliffs, at anchor where with umbrage
wide

Von chestnuts half the latticed boat-
house hide,

Shed from their sides, that face the sun's
slant beam.

Strong flakes of radiance on the tremu-
lous stream ;

Raised by yon travelling flock, a dusty
cloud

Mounts from the road, and spreads its
moving shroud ;

The shepherd, all involved in wreaths
of fire,

Now shows a shadowy speck, and now is
lost entire.

Into a gradual calm the breezes sink,
A blue rim borders all the lake's still

brink ;

There doth the twinkling aspen's foliage
sleep,

And insects clothe, like dust, the glassy
deep ;

And now, on every side, the surface
breaks

Into blue spots, and slowly lengthen-
ing streaks ;

Here, plots of sparkling water tremble
bright

With thousand thousand twinkling
points of light ;

There, waves that, hardly weltering, die
away,

Tip their smooth ridges with a softer ray ;
And now the whole wide lake in deep

repose

Is hushed, and like a burnished mirror
glows,

Save where, along the shady western
margin,

Coasts, with industrious oar, the charcoal
barge.

Their panniered train a group of
potters goad,

Winding from side to side up the steep
road ;

The peasant, from yon cliff of fearful edge
Shot, down the headlong path darts with

his sledge

Bright beams the lonely mountain-horse
illumine

Feeding 'mid purple heath, "green
rings,"¹ and broom ;

While the sharp slope the slackened team
confounds,

Downward the ponderous timber-wain
resounds ;

In foamy breaks the rill, with merry song,
Dashed o'er the rough rock, lightly leaps

along ;

From lonesome chapel at the mountain's
feet,

Three humble bells their rustic chime re-
peat ;

Sounds from the water-side the hammered
boat ;

And blasted quarry thunders, heard
remote !

Even here, amid the sweep of endless
woods,

¹ "Vivid rings of green."—GREENWOOD'S
POEM ON SPOTTING.

Blue pomp of lakes, high cliffs, and falling
floods,
Not undelightful are the simplest charms,
Found by the grassy door of mountain-
farms.

Sweetly ferocious, round his native
walks,
Pride of his sister-wives, the monarch
stalks ;
Spur-clad his nervous feet, and firm his
tread ;
A crest of purple tops the warrior's head.
Bright sparks his black and rolling eye-
ball hurls
Afar, his tail he closes and unfurls ;
On tiptoe reared, he strains his clarion
throat,
Threatened by faintly-answering farms
remote :
Again with his shrill voice the mountain
rings,
While, flapped with conscious pride, re-
sound his wings !

Where, mixed with graceful birch, the
sombrous pine
And yew-tree o'er the silver rocks recline :
I love to mark the quarry's moving trains,
Dwarf panniered steeds, and men, and
numerous wains :

How busy all the enormous hive within,
While Echo dallies with its various din !
Some (hear you not their chisels' clinking
sound ?)

Toil, small as pigmies in the gulf pro-
found ;

Some, dim between the lofty cliffs des-
cended,

O'erwalk the slender plank from side to
side ;

These, by the pale-blue rocks that cease-
less ring,

In airy baskets hanging, work and sing,

Just where a cloud above the moun-
tain rears

An edge all flame, the broadening sun
appears ;

A long blue bar its regis orb divides,
And breaks the spreading of its golden
tides ;

And now that orb has touched the purple
steep

Whose softened image penetrates the
deep.

'Cross the calm lake's blue shades the
cliffs aspire,

With towers and woods, a "prospect all
on fire" ;

"Doloments feroces."—Tasso.—In this
description of the rock, I remembered a spirited
note of the same animal in L'Agriculture, ou Les
Épigrammes Françaises, of M. Rousseau.

While coves and secret hollows, through
a ray

Of fainter gold, a purple gleam betray.
Each slip of lawn the broken rocks be-
tween

Shines in the light with more than earth-
ly green :

Deep yellow beams the scattered stems
illumine.

Far in the level forest's central gloom :
Waving his hat, the shepherd, from the
vale,

Directs his winding dog the cliffs to
scale,—

The dog, loud barking, 'mid the glitter-
ing rocks,

Hunts, where his master points, the
intercocked flocks.

Where oaks o'erhang the road the
radiance shoots

On tawny earth, wild weeds, and twisted
roots :

The druid-stones a brightened ring un-
fold :

And all the babbling brooks are liquid
gold ;

Sunk to a curve, the day-star lessens still,
Gives one bright glance, and drops
behind the hill.

In these secluded vales, if village fame,
Confirmed by hoary hairs, belief may
claim ;

When up the hills, as now, retired the
light,

Strange apparitions mocked the shep-
herd's sight.

The form appears of one that spurs his
steed

Midway along the hill with desperate
speed ;

Unhurt pursues his lengthened flight,
while all

Attend, at every stretch, his headlong
fall.

Anon, appears a brave, a gorgeous show
Of horsemen-shadows moving to and
fro ;

At intervals imperial banners stream,
And now the van reflects the solar beam ;

The rear through iron brown betrays a
sullen gleam.

While silent stands the admiring crowd
below,

Silent the visionary warriors go,
Winding in ordered pomp their upward
way

Till the last banner of the long array

From Thomson.

See a description of an appearance of this
kind in Clark's Survey of the Lakes, accompa-
nied by vouchers of its veracity, that may amuse
the reader.

Has disappeared, and every trace is fled
Of splendour—save the beacon's spiry
head
Tipt with eve's latest gleam of burning
red.

Now, while the solemn evening shadows sail,
On slowly-waving pinions, down the
vale;

And, fronting the bright west, yon oak
entwines,

Its darkening boughs and leaves, in
stronger lines;

'Tis pleasant near the tranquil lake to
stray

Where, winding on along some secret
bay.

The swan uplifts his chest, and backward
flings

His neck, a varying arch, between his
towering wings:

The eye that marks the gliding creature
sees

How graceful, pride can be, and how
majestic, ease.

While tender cares and mild domestic
loves

With furtive watch pursue her as she
moves,

The female with a meeker charm suc-
ceeds,

And her brown little-ones around her
leads,

Nibbling the water lilies as they pass,
Or playing wanton with the floating
grass.

She, in a mother's care, her beauty's
pride

Forgetting, calls the wearied to her side:
Alternately they mount her back, and
rest

Close by her mantling wings' embraces
rest.

Long may they float upon this flood
serene;

Theirs be these holms untrodden, still,
and green,

Where leafy shades fence off the
blustering gale,

And breathes in peace the lily of the
vale!

Yon isle, which feels not even the milk-
maid's feet,

Yet hears her song, "by distance made
more sweet."

Yon isle conceals their home, their hut-
like bower;

Green water-rushes overspread the
floor;

Long grass and willows form the woven
wall,

And above the roof the poplar

Thence issuing often with unwieldy
stalk,

They crush with broad black feet their
flowery walk;

Or, from the neighbouring water, hear at
morn

The hound, the horse's tread, and mellow
horn;

Involve their serpent-necks in changeful
rings,

Rolled wantonly between their slippery
wings,

Or, starting up with noise and rude
delight,

Force half upon the wave their cumbrous
flight.

Fair Swan! by all a mother's joys
caressed,

Haply some wretch has eyed, and called
thee blessed;

When with her infants, from some shady
seat

By the lake's edge, she rose—to face the
noontide heat;

Or taught their limbs along the dusty
road

A few short steps to totter with their
load.

I see her now, denied to lay her head,
On cold blue nights, in hut or straw-
built shed,

Turn to a silent smile their sleepy cry,
By pointing to the gliding moon on high.

—When low-hung clouds each star of
summer hide,

And fireless are the vallies far and wide,
Where the brook brawls along the public
road

Dark with bat-haunted ashes stretching
broad,

Oft has she taught them on her lap to lay
The shining glow-worm; or, in heedless
play,

Toss it from hand to hand, disquieted;
While others, not unseen, are free to shed
Green unmolested light upon their mossy
bed.

Oh! when the sleety showers her path
assail.

And like a torrent roars the headstrong
gale;

No more her breath can thaw their
fingers cold,

Their frozen arms her neck no more can
fold;

Weak roof a cowering form two babes to
shield,

And faint the fire a dying heart can yield!
Press the sad kiss, fond mother! vainly
fears

Thy flooded cheek to wet them with its
tears;

No tears can chill them, and no bosom
warms,
Thy breast their death-bed, confined in
thine arms!

Sweet are the sounds that mingle from
afar,
Heard by calm lakes, as peeps the folding
star,
Where the duck dabbles 'mid the rustling
sedge,
And feeding pike starts from the water's
edge,
Or the swan stirs the reeds, his neck and
bill
Wetting, that drip upon the water still;
And heron, as resounds the trodden
shore,
Shoots upward, darting his long neck
before.

Now, with religious awe, the farewell
light
Blends with the solemn colouring of
night;
'Mid groves of clouds that crest the
mountain's brow,
And round the west's proud lodge their
shadows throw,
Like Una shining on her gloomy way,
The half-seen form of Twilight roams
astray;
Shedding, through paly loop-holes mild
and small,
Gleams that upon the lake's still bosom
fall;
Soft o'er the surface creep those lustres
pale
Tracking the motions of the fitful gale.
With restless interchange at once the
bright
Wins on the shade, the shade upon the
light.
No favoured eye was e'er allowed to gaze
On lovelier spectacle in faery days;
When gentle Spirits urged a sportive
chase,
Brushing with lucid wands the water's
face;
While music, stealing round the glimmer-
ing deeps,
Charmed the tall circle of the enchanted
steeps.
—The lights are vanished from the
watery plains:
No wreck of all the pageantry remains.
Unheeded night has overcome the vales:
On the dark earth the wearied vision
fals;
The latest lingerer of the forest train,
The lone black fir, forsakes the faded
plain;
Last evening sight, the cottage smoke no
more,

Lost in the thickened darkness, glimmers
hoar;
And, towering from the sullen dark-
brown emere,
Like a black wall, the mountain-steeps
appear.
—Now o'er the soothed accordant heart
we feel
A sympathetic twilight slowly steal,
And ever, as we fondly muse, we find
The soft gloom deepening on the tranquil
mind.
Stay! pensive, sadly-pleasing visions
stay!
Ah no! as fades the vale, they fade away:
Yet still the tender, vacant gloom re-
mains:
Still the cold cheek its shuddering tear
retains.

The bird, who ceased, with fading
light, to thread
Silent the hedge or steamy rivulet's bed,
From his grey re-appearing tower shall
soon
Salute with gladsome note the rising
moon.
While with a hoar light she frosts the
ground,
And pours a deeper blue to Aether's
bound;
Pleased, as she moves, her pomp of clouds
to fold
In robes of azure, fleecy-white, and gold.
Above yon eastern hill, where darkness
broods
O'er all its vanished dells, and lawns,
and woods;
Where but a mass of shade the sight can
trace,
Even now she shews, half-veiled, her
lovely face:
Across the gloomy valley flings her light,
Far to the western slopes with hamlets
white;
And gives, where woods the chequered
upland strew,
To the green corn of summer, autumn's
hue.

Thus Hope, first pouring from her
blessed horn
Her dawn, far lovelier than the moon's
own morn,
'Till higher mounted, strives in vain to
cheer
The weary hills, impervious, blackening
near;
Yet does she still, undaunted, throw the
while
On darling spots remote her tempting
smile.
Even now she decks for me a distant
scene,

(For dark and broad the gulf of time
between)

Gilding that cottage with her fondest ray,
(Sole bourn, sole wish, sole object of my
way ;

How fair its lawns and sheltering woods
appear !

How sweet its streamlet murmurs in mine
ear !)

Where we, my Friend, to happy days
shall rise,

'Till our small share of hardly-paining
signs

(For sighs will ever trouble human breath)
Creep hushed into the tranquil breast of
death.

But now the clear bright Moon her
zenith gains,

And, rimy without speck, extend the
plains :

The deepest cleft the mountain's front
displays

Scarce hides a shadow from her search-
ing rays :

From the dark-blue faint silvery threads
divide

The hills, while gleams below the azure
tide :

Time softly treads ; throughout the land-
scape breathes

A peace unenlivened, not disturbed, by
wreaths

Of charcoal-smoke, that o'er the fallen
wood,

Steal down the hill, and spread along the
flood.

The song of mountain-streams, un-
heard by day,

Now hardly heard, beguiles my home-
ward way.

Air listens, like the sleeping water, still,
To catch the spiritual music of the hill,

Broke only by the slow clock tolling deep,
Or shout that wakes the ferry-man from
sleep,

The echoed hoof nearing the distant
shore,

The boat's first motion—made with
dashing oar ;

Sound of closed gate, across the water
borne,

Hurrying the timid hare through dust-
ling corn ;

The sportive outcry of the mocking owl ;
And at long intervals the mill-dog's howl ;

The distant forge's swinging thump pro-
found,

Or yell, in the deep woods, of lonely
hound.

1787, 8, & 9.

IV

LINES

WRITTEN WHILE SAILING IN A BOAT AT
EVENING

How richly glows the water's breast
Before us, tinged with evening hues,
While, facing thus the crimson west,
The boat her silent course pursues !
And see how dark the backward stream !
A little moment past so smiling !
And still, perhaps, with faithless gleam,
Some other loiterers beguiling.

Such views the youthful Bard allure ;
But, heedless of the following gloom,
He deems their colours shall endure
Fill peace go with him to the tomb.

—And let him nurse his fond deceit,
And what if he must die in sorrow !
Who would not cherish dreams so sweet,
Though grief and pain may come to-
morrow ?

1789

V

REMEMBRANCE OF COLLINS

COMPOSED UPON THE THAMES NEAR
RICHMOND

GLIDE gently, thus for ever glide,
O Thames ! that other bards may see
As lovely visions by thy side
As now, fair river ! come to me.
O glide, fair stream ! for ever so,
Thy quiet soul on all bestowing,
Till all our minds for ever flow
As thy deep waters now are flowing.

Vain thought !—Yet be as now thou art,
That in thy waters may be seen
The image of a poet's heart,
How bright, how solemn, how serene :
Such as did once the Poet bless,
Who murmuring here a later ditty,
Could find no refuge from distress
But in the milder grief of pity.

Now let us, as we float along,
For him suspend the dashing oar ;
And pray that never child of song
May know that Poet's sorrows more.
How calm ! how still ! the only sound,
The dripping of the oar suspended !
—The evening darkness gathers round
By virtue's holiest Powers attended.

1789.

¹ Collins' Ode on the death of Thomson, the
last written, I believe, of the poems which were
published during his life-time. This Ode is also
alluded to in the next stanza.

POEMS WRITTEN IN YOUTH

VI DESCRIPTIVE SKETCHES

TAKEN DURING A PEDESTRIAN TOUR
AMONG THE ALPS
TO

THE REV. ROBERT JONES,
FELLOW OF ST. JOHN'S COLLEGE,
CAMBRIDGE

DEAR SIR,

HOWEVER desirous I might have been of giving you proofs of the high place you hold in my esteem, I should have been cautious of wounding your delicacy by thus publicly addressing you; had not the circumstance of our having been companions among the Alps seemed to give this dedication a propriety sufficient to do away any scruples which your modesty might otherwise have suggested.

In inscribing this little work to you, I cherish my heart. You know well how great is the difference between two companions strolling in a post-chaise, and two travellers plodding slowly along the road, side by side, each with his little knapsack of necessities upon his shoulder. How much more of heart between the two latter!

I am happy in being conscious that I shall have one reader who will approach the conclusion of these few pages with regret. You they must certainly interest, in reminding you of moments to which you can hardly look back without a pleasure not the less dear from a shade of melancholy. You will meet with few images without recollecting the spot where we observed them together; consequently, whatever is feeble in my design, or spiritless in my colouring, will be amply supplied by your own memory.

With still greater propriety I might have inscribed to you a description of some of the features of your native mountains, through which we have wandered together, in the same manner, with so much pleasure. But the sunsets, which give such splendour to the vale of Clwyd, Snowdon, the chair of Idris, the quiet village of Bethgeleit, Menai and her Druids, the Alpine steep of the Conway, and the still more interesting windings of the wizard stream of the Dee, remain yet untouched. Apprehensive that my pencil may never be exercised on these subjects, I cannot let slip this opportunity of thus publicly assuring you with how much affection and esteem

I am, dear Sir,

Most sincerely yours,

W. WORDSWORTH.

London, 1793.

Happiness (if she had been to be found on earth) among the charms of Nature—Pleasures of the pedestrian Traveller—Author crosses France to the Alps—Present state of the Grande Chartreuse—Lake of Como—Time, Sunset—Same Scene, Twilight—Same Scene, Morning; its voluptuous character; Old man and forest-cottage music—River Tusa—Via Mala and Grison Gipsy—Skellenen-thal—Lake of Uri—Stormy sunset—Chapel of William Tell—Force of local emotion—Character-chaser—View of the higher Alps—Manner of life of a Swiss mountaineer, interspersed

with views of the highest Alps—Golden age of the Alps—Life and views continued—Ran: des Vaches, famous Swiss Alps—Abbey of Einsiedlen and its pilgrims—Valley of Chamouny—Mont Blanc—Slavery of Savoy—Influence of liberty on cottage-happiness—France—Wish for the extirpation of slavery—Conclusion.

WERE there, below, a spot of holy ground
Where from distress a refuge might be found,

And solitude prepare the soul for heaven;
Sure, nature's God that spot to man has given

Where falls the purple morning far and wide
In flakes of light upon the mountain side;

Where with loud voice the power of water shakes
The leafy wood, or sleeps in quiet lakes.

Yet not unrecompensed the man shall roam,

Who at the call of summer quits his home,
And plods through some wide realm o'er vale and height,

Though seeking only holiday delight;
At least, not owing to him: if an aim
To which the sage would give a prouder name.

No gains too cheaply earned his fancy cloy,

Though every passing zephyr whispers joy;

Brisk toil, alternating with ready ease,
Feeds the clear current of his sympathies.
For him sod-seats the cottage-door adorn;

And peeps the far-off spire, his evening frown!

Dear is the forest frowning o'er his head,
And dear the velvet green-sward to his tread:

Moves there a cloud o'er mid-day's flaming eye?

Upward he looks—"and calls it luxury:"

Kind Nature's charities his steps attend;
In every babbling brook he finds a friend;

While chastening thoughts of sweetest use, bestowed

By wisdom, moralise his pensive road.
Host of his welcome inn, the noon-tide bower,

To his spare meal he calls the passing poor;

He views the sun uplift his golden fire,
Or sink, with heart alive like Memnon's lyre¹;

Blesses the moon that comes with kindly ray,

¹ The lyre of Memnon is reported to have emitted melancholy or cheerful tones, as it was touched by the sun's evening or morning rays.

To light him shaken by his rugged way.
Back from his sight no bashful children
steal;

He sits a brother at the cottage meal;
His humble looks no shy restraint im-
part;

Around him plays at will the virgin heart.
While, unsuspended¹ wheels the village
dance.

The maidens eye him with enquiring
glance,
Much wondering by what fit of crazing
care,

Or deprecate love, bewildered, he came
there.

A hope, that prudence could, not then
approve,

That clung to Nature with a truant's
love,
O'er Gallia's wastes of corn my footsteps
led;

Her files of road-elms, high above my
head
In long-drawn vista, rustling in the
breeze;

Or where her pathways straggle as they
please

By lonely farms and secret villages.
But lo! the Alps ascending white in air,
Toy with the sun and glitter from afar.

And now, emerging from the forest's
gloom,

I greet thee, Chartreuse, while I mourn
thy doom.

Whither is fled that Power whose frown
severe
Awed sober Reason till she crouched in
fear?

That Silence, once in deathlike fetters
bound,

Chains that were loosened only by the
sound
Of holy rites chanted in measured
round?

—The voice of blasphemy the fane
alarms,

The cloister startles at the gleam of arms.
The thundering tube the aged angler
hears,

Bent o'er the groaning flood that sweeps
away his tears.

Cloud-piercing pine-trees nod their
troubled heads,

Spikes, rocks, and lawns a browner night
o'er-spreads;

Strong terror checks the female peas-
ant's sighs,
And start the astonished shades at
female eyes.

From Bruno's forest screams the
startled jay,
And slow the insulted eagle wheels away.

A viewless flight of laughing Demons
mock
The Cross, by angels planted¹ on the
aërial rock.

The "parting Genius" sighs with hollow
breath

Along the mystic streams of Life and
Death².

Swelling the outcry dull, that long re-
sounds
Portentous through her old woods'
trackless bounds.

Vallombre³, 'mid her falling fanes,
deplores,
For ever broke, the sabbath of her
bowers.

More pleased, my foot the hidden
margin roves

Of Como, bosomed deep in chestnut
groves.

No meadows thrown between, the giddy
steeps
Tower, bare or sylvan, from the narrow
deeps.

—To towns, whose shades of no rude
noise complain,
From ringing team apart and grating
wain—

To flat-roofed towns, that touch the
water's bound,

Or lurk in woody sunless glens profound,
Or, from the bending rocks, obtrusive
cling,

And o'er the whitened wave their sha-
dows fling—

The pathway leads, as round the steeps
it twines;

And Silence loves its purple roof of vines.
The loitering traveller hence, at evening,
sees

From rock-hewn steps the sail between
the trees;

Or marks, 'mid opening cliffs, fair dark-
eyed maids

Tend the small harvest of their garden
glades;

Or stops the solemn mountain-shades
to view
Stretch o'er the pictured mirror broad
and blue,

And track the yellow lights from steep
to steep,
As up the opposing hills they slowly
creep.

Aloft, here, half a village shines arrayed
In golden light; half hides itself in
shade:

¹ Alluding to crosses seen on the tops of the
spiry rocks of Chartreuse, which have every
appearance of being inaccessible.

² Names of rivers at the Chartreuse.

³ Name of one of the valleys of the Chartreuse.

While, from amid the darkened roofs,
the spire,
Restlessly flashing, seems to mount like
fire:

There, all unshaded, blazing forests
throw

Rich golden verdure on the lake below.
Slow glides the sail along the illumined
shore,

And steals into the shade the lazy oar;
Soft bosoms breathe around contagious
sighs,

And amorous music on the water dies.

How blest, delicious scene! the eye
that greets

Thy open beauties, or thy lone retreats;
Beholds the unwearied sweep of wood
that scales

Thy cliffs; the endless waters of thy
vales;

Thy lowly cots that sprinkle all the shore,
Each with its household boat beside the
door;

Thy torrents shooting from the clear-
blue sky;

Thy towns, that cleave, like swallows'
nests, on high;

That glimmer hoar in eve's last light,
descried

Dim from the twilight water's shaggy
side,

Whence lutes and voices down the en-
chanted woods

Steal, and compose the oar-forgotten
floods;

—Thy lake, that, streaked or dappled,
blue or grey,

'Mid smoking woods gleams hid from
morning's ray

Slow-travelling down the western hills,
t' unfold

Its green-tinged margin in a blaze of
gold;

Thy glittering steeples, whence the matin
bell

Calls forth the woodman from his desert
cell,

And quickens the blithe sound of oars
that pass

Along the streaming lake, to early mass.
But now farewell to each and all—adieu

To every charm, and last and chief to
you,

Ye lovely maidens that in noontide shade
Rest near your little plots of wheaten
glade;

To all that binds the soul in powerless
trance,

Lip-dewing song, and ringlet-tossing
dance;

Where sparkling eyes and breaking
smiles illumine

The sylvan cabin's lute-enlivened gloom.

—Alas! the very murmur of the streams
Breathes o'er the falling soul voluptuous
dreams,

While Slavery, forcing the sunk mind to
dwell

On joys that might disgrace the cap-
tive's cell,

Her shameless timbrel shakes on Comus'
marge,

And lures from bay to bay the vocal
barge.

Yet are thy softer arts with power
indued

To soothe and cheer the poor man's
solitude.

By silent cottage-doors, the peasant's
home

Left vacant for the day, I loved to roam.
But on e I pierced the mazes of a wood

In which a cabin undeserted stood;
There an old man an olden measure

scanned

On a rude viol touched with withered
hand.

As lambs or fawns in April clustering lie
Under a hoary oak's thin canopy,

Stretched at his feet, with steadfast up-
ward eye,

His children's children listened to the
sound;

—A Hermit with his family around!
But let us hence; for fair Locarno

smiles

Embowered in walnut slopes and citron
isles;

Or seek at eve the banks of Tusa's
stream,

Where, 'mid dim towers and woods,
her waters gleam.

From the bright wave, in solemn gloom,
retire

The dull-red steeples, and, darkening still,
aspire

To where afar rich orange lustres glow
Round undistinguished clouds, and

rocks, and snow:

Or, led where Via Mala's chasms confine
The indignant waters of the infant

Rhine,

Hang o'er the abyss, whose else impervi-
ous gloom

His burning eyes with fearful light
illumine.

The mind condemned, without re-
prieve, to go

O'er life's long deserts with its charge
of woe,

With sad congratulation joins the train
Where beasts and men together o'er the

plain
Move on—a mighty caravan of pain:

¹ The river along whose banks you descended in
crossing the Alps by the Simplon Pass.

Hope, strength, and courage, social
suffering brings,
Freshening the wilderness with shades
and springs.

—here he whence lot far otherwise is
cast :

Sole human tenant of the piny waste,
By choice or doom a gipsy wanders here,
A nursing babe her only comforter ;
Lo, where she sits beneath yon shaggy
rock,
A cowering shape half hid in curling
smoke !

When lightning among clouds and
mountain-snows
Predominates, and darkness comes and
goes,
And the fierce torrent, at the flashes
broad
Starts, like a horse, beside the glaring
road—
She seeks a covert from the battering
shower
In the roof¹ bridge¹ ; the bridge, in that
dread hour,
Itself all trembling at the torrent's power.

Nor is she more at ease on some *still*
night,
When not a star supplies the comfort of
its light ;
Only the waning moon hangs dull and
red
Above a melancholy mountain's head,
Then sets. In total gloom the Vagrant
sighs,
Stoops her sick head, and shuts her
weary eyes ;
Or on her fingers counts the distant
click,
Or, to the drowsy crow of midnight cock,
Listens, or quakes while from the
forest's gulf
Howls near and nearer yet the famished
wolf.

From the green vale of Urseren smooth
and wide
Descend we now, the maddened Reuss
our guide ;
By rocks that, shutting out the blessed
day,
Cling tremblingly to rocks as loose as
they ;
By cells² upon whose image, while the
prays,

¹ Most of the bridges among the Alps are of
wood, and covered : these bridges have a heavy
appearance, and rather injure the effect of the
scenery in some places.

² The Catholic religion prevails here : these
cells are, as is well known, very common in the
Catholic countries, situated, like the Roman
temples, along the roads.

The kneeling peasant scarcely dares to
gaze :

By many a votive death-cross³ planted
near,

And watered duly with the pious tear,
That faded silent from the upward eye
Unmoved with each rude form of peril
nigh ;

Fixed on the anchor left by Him who
saves

Alike in whelming snows, and roaring
waves.

But soon a peopled region on the sight
Opens—a little world of calm delight ;
Where mists, suspended on the expiring
gale,

Spread rooflike o'er the deep secluded
vale,

And beams of evening slipping in be-
tween,

Gently illuminate a sober scene :—
Here, on the brown wood-cottages⁴ they
sleep,

There, over rock or sloping pasture creep.
On as we journey, in clear view displayed,
The still vale lengthens underneath its
shade

Of low-hung vapour : on the freshened
mead

The green light sparkles ;—the dim
hollows recede.

While pastoral pipes and streams the
landscape lull,

And bells of passing mules that tinkle
dull,

In solemn shapes before the admiring
eye

Dilated hang the misty pines on high,
Huge convent domes with pinnacles and
towers,

And antique castles seen through gleamy
showers.

From such romantic dreams, my soul,
awake !

To sterner pleasure, where, by Uri's lake
In Nature's pristine majesty outspread,
Winds neither road nor path for foot to
tread :

The rocks rise naked as a wall, or stretch,
Far o'er the water, hung with groves
of beech ;

Aerial pines from loftier steeps ascend,
Nor stop but where creation seems to
end.

Yet here and there, if mid the savage
scene

Appears a scanty plot of smiling green,

³ Crosses, commemorative of the deaths of
travellers by the fall of snow, and other accidents,
are very common along this dreadful road.

⁴ The houses in the more retired Swiss valleys
are all built of wood.

Up from the lake a zigzag path will creep
To reach a small wood-hut hung boldly
on the steep.

—Before those thresholds (never can
they know

The face of traveller passing to and fro),
No peasant leans upon his pole, to tell
For whom at morning tolled the funeral
bell;

Their watch-dog ne'er his angry bark
forgoes,

Touched by the beggar's moan of human
woes;

The shady porch ne'er offered a cool seat
To pilgrims overcome by summer's heat.
Yet thither the world's business finds
its way

At times, and tales unsought beguile
the day,

And *there* are those fond thoughts which
Solitude,

However stern, is powerless to exclude.
There doth the maiden watch her lover's
sail

Approaching, and upbraid the tardy gale;
At midnight listens till his parting oar,
And its last echo, can be heard no more.

And what if ospreys, cormorants,
herons cry,

Amid tempestuous vapours driving by,
Or hovering over wastes too bleak to
rear

That common growth of earth, the food-
ful ear;

Where the green apple shrivels on the
spray,

And pines the unripened pear in sum-
mer's kindest ray;

Contentment shares the desolate domain
With Independence, child of high Dis-
dain.

Exulting 'mid the winter of the skies,
Shy as the jealous chamois, Freedom
flies,

And *graspe* by fits her sword, and often
eyes;

And sometimes, as from rock to rock
she bounds,

The Patriot nymph starts at imagined
sounds,

And, wildly pausing, oft she hangs
aghast,

Whether some old Swiss air hath checked
her haste

Or thrill of Spartan life is caught be-
tween the blast.

Swain with incessant rains from hour
to hour,

All day the floods a deepening murmur
pour:

The sky is veiled, and every cheerful sight;

Dark is the region as with coming night;
But what a sudden burst of overpow-
ering light!

Triumphant on the bosom of the storm,
Glances the wheeling eagle's glorious
form!

Eastward, in long perspective glittering,
shine

The wood-crowned cliffs that o'er the
lake recline;

Those lofty cliffs a hundred streams
unfold,

At once to pillars turned that flange with
gold;

Behind his sail the peasant shrinks, to
shun

The *west* that burns like one dilated sun
A crucible of mighty compass, felt

By mountains, glowing till they seem
to melt.

But, lo! the boatman, overawed,
before

The pictured fane of Tell suspends his
oar;

Confused the Marathonian tale appears,
While his eyes sparkle with heroic tears.

And who, that walks where men of
ancient days

Have wrought with godlike arm the
deeds of praise,

Feels not the spirit of the place control,
Or rouse and agitate his labouring soul?

Say, who, by thinking on Canadian hills,
Or wild Aosta lulled by Alpine rills,

On Zutphen's plain; or on that high-
land dell,

Through which rough Garry cleaves his
way, can tell

What high resolves exalt the tenderest
thought

Of him whom passion rivets to the spot,
Where breathed the gale that caught

Wolfe's happiest sigh,
And the last sunbeam fell on Bayard's

eye;

Where bleeding Sidney from the cup
retired,

And glad Dundee in "faint huzzas"
expired?

But now with other mind I stand
alone

Upon the summit of this naked cone,
And watch the fearless chamois-hunter

chase
His prey, through tracts abrupt of deso-
late space,

Through vacant worlds where Nature
never gave.

¹ For most of the images in the next sixteen
verses, I am indebted to M. Raymond's interest-
ing observations annexed to his translation of
Coxe's *Tour in Switzerland*.

A brook to murmur or a bough to wave,
Which unsubstantial Phantoms sacred
keep;

Thro' worlds where Life, and Voice, and
Motion sleep;

Where silent Hours their death-like
sway extend,

Save when the avalanche breaks loose,
to rend

Its way with uproar, till the ruin,
drowned

In some dense wood¹ or gulf of snow
profound,

Mocks the dull ear of Time with deaf
abortive sounds²;

'Tis his, while wandering on from
height to height,

To see a planet's pomp and steady
light³

In the least star of scarce-appearing
night;

While the pale moon moves near him,
on the bound

Of ether, shining with diminished round,
And far and wide the icy summit's blaze,
Rejoicing in the glory of her rays:

To him the day-star glitters small and
bright,

Shorn of its beams, insufferably white.
And he can look beyond the sun, and
view

Those fast-receding depths of sable blue
Flying till vision can no more pursue!

—At once bewildering mists around him
close,

And cold and hunger are his least of
woes;

The Demon of the snow, with angry roar
Descending, shuts for aye his prison
door.

Soon with despair's whole weight his
spirit's sink;

Bread has he none, the snow must be
his drink

And, ere his eyes can close upon the
day,

The eagle of the Alps o'er shades her prey.

Now couch thyself where, heard with
ear afar,

Thunders through-echoing pines the
headlong Aar;

Or rather stay to taste the mild delights
Of pensive Underwalden's¹ pastoral
heights.

—Is there who 'mid these awful wilds
has seen

The native Genii walk the mountain
green?

Or heard, while other worlds their charms
reveal,

Soft music o'er the aerial summit steal?

While o'er the desert, answering every
close,

Rich stream of sweetest perfume comes
and goes.

—And sure there is a secret Power that
reigns

Here, where no trace of man the spot
profanes.

Nought but the chalets², flat and bare,
on high

Suspended 'mid the quiet of the sky;

Or distant herds that pasturing upward
creep,

And, not untended, climb the dangerous
steep.

How still! no irreligious sound or sight
Rouses the soul from her severe delight.

An idle voice the sabbath region fills
Of Deep that calls to Deep across the
hills,

And with that voice accords the soothing
sound

Of drowsy bells, for ever tinkling round;

Faint wail of eagle melting into blue
Beneath the cliffs, and pine-woods'
steady sigh³;

The solitary heifer's deepened low;

Or rumbling, heard remote, of falling
snow.

All motions, sounds, and voices, far and
nigh,

Blend in a music of tranquillity;

Save when, a stranger seen below, the
boy
Shouts from the echoing hills with
savage joy.

When, from the sunny breast of open
seas,

And bays with myrtle fringed, the
southern breeze

Comes on to gladden April with the
sight

Of green isles widening on each snow-
clad height;

When shouts and lowing herds the
valley fill,

And louder torrents stun the noon-tide
hill,

The pastoral Swiss begin the cliffs to
scale,

Leaving to silence the deserted vale;

And like the Patriarchs in their simple
age

¹ The people of this Canton are supposed to be of a more melancholy disposition than the other inhabitants of the Alps; this, if true, may proceed from their living more secluded.

² This picture is from the middle region of the Alps. Chalets are summer huts for the Swiss herdsmen.

³ Sigh, a Scotch word expressive of the sound of the wind through the trees.

Move, as the verdure leads, from stage
to-stage;

High and more high in summer's heat
they go,

And hear the rattling thunder far below;
Or steal beneath the mountains, half-
deterred,

Where huge rocks tremble to the bellow-
ing herd.

One I behold who, 'cross the foaming
food,

Leaps with a bound of graceful hardi-
hood;

Another high on that green ledge;—
he gained

The tempting spot with every sinew
strained;

And downward thence a knot of grass
he throws,

Food for his beasts in time of winter
snows.

—Far different life from what Tradition
hoar

Transmits of happier lot in times of
yore!

Then Summer lingered long; and honey
flowed

From out the rocks, the wild bees' safe
abode:

Continual waters welling cheered the
waste,

And plants were wholesome, now of
deadly taste:

Nor Winter yet his frozen stores had
piled,

Usurping where the fairest herbage
smiled;

Nor Hunger driven the herds from
pastures bare,

To climb the treacherous cliffs for scanty
fare.

Then the milk-thistle flourished through
the land,

And forced the full-swollen udder to
demand,

Thrice every day, the pail and welcome
hand.

Thus does the father to his children tell
Of banished bliss, by fancy loved too
well.

Alas! that human guilt provoked the
rod

Of angry Nature to avenge her God.

Still, Nature, ever just, to him imparts
Joys only given to uncorrupted hearts.

'Tis morn: with gold the verdant
mountain glows;

More high, the snowy peaks with hues
of rose.

Far-stretched beneath the many-tinted
hills,

A mighty waste of mist the valley fills,

A solemn sea! whose billows wide
around

Stand motionless, to awful silence
bound:

Pines, on the coast, through mist their
tops uprear,

That like to leaning masts of stranded
ships appear.

A single chasm, a gulf of gloomy blue,
Gapes in the centre of the sea—and
through

That dark mysterious gulf ascending,
sound

Innumerable streams with roar pro-
found.

Mount through the nearer vapours
notes of birds,

And merry flageolet: the low of herds,
The bark of dogs, the sniffer's tinkling
bell,

Talk, laughter, and perchance a church-
tower knell:

Think not, the peasant from aloft has
gazed

And heard with heart unmoved, with
soul unraised:

Nor is his spirit less enrap't, nor less
Alive to independent happiness,

Then, when he lies, out-stretched, at
even-tide

Upon the fragrant mountain's purple
side:

For as the pleasures of his simple day
Beyond his native valley seldom stray,

Nought round its darling precincts can
he find

But brings some past enjoyment to his
mind;

While Hope, reclining upon Pleasure's
urn,

Binds her wild wreaths, and whispers
his return.

Once, Man entirely free, alone and
wild,

Was blest as free—for he was Nature's
child.

He, all superior but his God disdained,
Walked none restraining, and by none
restrained:

Confessed no law but what his reason
taught,

Did all he wished, and wished but what
he ought.

As man in his primeval dower arrayed
The image of his glorious Sirs displayed,

Even so, by faithful Nature guarded,
here

The traces of primeval Man appear:
The simple dignity, no form debate:

The eye sublime, and soul high-
The slave of none, or beast, or
lord,

His book he prizes, nor neglects his sword;
 —Well taught by that to feel his rights,
 prepared.
 With this "the blessings he enjoys to
 guard."

And, as his native hills encircle
 ground
 For many a marvellous victory re-
 nowned,
 The work of Freedom daring to oppose,
 With few in arms¹, innumerable foes,
 When to those famous fields his steps
 are led,
 An unknown power connects him with
 the dead:
 For images of other worlds are there;
 Awful the light, and holy is the air.
 Fitfully, and in flashes, through his
 soul,
 Like sun-lit tempests, troubled trans-
 ports roll;
 His bosom heaves, his Spirit towers
 amain,
 Beyond the senses and their little reign.

And oft, when that dread vision hath
 past by,
 He holds with God himself communion
 high,
 There where the peal of swelling torrents
 fills
 The sky-roofed temple of the eternal
 hills;
 Or, when upon the mountain's silent
 brow
 Reclined, he sees, above him and below,
 Bright stars of ice and azure fields of
 snow;
 While needle peaks of granite shooting
 bare
 Tremble in ever-varying tints of air.
 And when a gathering weight of shadows
 brown
 Falls on the valleys as the sun goes
 down;
 And Pikes, of darkness named and fear
 and storms²,
 Utter in quiet their illumined forms.

¹ Alluding to several battles which the Swiss
 in very small numbers have gained over their
 oppressors, the house of Austria; and, in par-
 ticular, to one fought at Naffels near Glarus,
 where three hundred and thirty men are said to
 have defeated an army of between fifteen and
 twenty thousand Austrians. Scattered over
 the valley are to be found eleven stones, with
 this inscription, 1388, the year the battle was
 fought, marking out, as I was told upon the spot,
 the several places where the Austrians, attempt-
 ing to make a stand, were repulsed anew.

² As Bohren-Horn, the pike of terror; Wetter-
 Horn, the pike of storms, etc. etc.

In sea-like reach of prospect round him
 spread,
 Tinged like an angel's smile all rosy
 red—
 Awe in his breast with holiest love
 unites,
 And the near heavens impart their own
 delights.

When downward to his winter hut he
 goes,
 Dear and more dear the lessening circle
 grows;
 That hut which on the hills so oft em-
 ploys
 His thoughts, the central point of all his
 joys.
 And as a swallow, at the hour of rest,
 Peeps often ere she darts into her nest,
 So to the homestead, where the grand-
 sire tends
 A little prattling child, he oft descends,
 To glance a look upon the well-matched
 pair;
 Till storm and driving ice blockade
 him there.
 There, safely guarded by the woods
 behind,
 He hears the chiding of the baffled wind,
 Hears Winter calling all his terrors round,
 And, blest within himself, he shrinks
 not from the sound.

Through Nature's vale his homely
 pleasures glide.
 Unstained by envy, discontent, and
 pride;
 The bound of all his vanity, to deck,
 With one bright bell, a favourite heifer's
 neck;
 Well pleased upon some simple annual
 feast,
 Remembered half the year and hoped the
 rest,
 If dairy-produce, from his inner board,
 Of thrice ten summers dignify the board.
 —Alas! in every clime a flying ray
 Is all we have to cheer our wintry way;
 And here the unwilling mind may more
 than trace
 The general sorrows of the human race:
 The churlish gales of penury, that blow
 Cold as the north-wind o'er a waste of
 snow,
 To them the gentle groups of bliss deny
 That on the noon-day bank of leisure lie.
 Yet more:—compelled by Powers which
 only deign
 That solitary man disturb their reign.
 Powers that support an unremitting
 strife
 With all the tender charities of life,
 Full oft the father, when his sons have
 grown

To manhood, seems their title to disown;
And from his nest amid the storms of
heaven.

Drives, eagle-like, those sons as he was
driven;
With stern composure watches to the
plain—
And never, eagle-like, beholds again!

When long-familiar joys are all
resigned,
Why does their sad remembrance
haunt the mind?

Lo! where through flat Batavia's willowy
groves,

Or by the lazy Seine, the exile roves;
O'er the curled waters Alpine measures
swell,

And search the affections to their in-
most cell;

Sweet poison spreads along the listener's
veins,

Turning past pleasures into mortal
pains;

Poison, which not a frame of steel can
brave,

Bows his young head with sorrow to
the grave.¹

Gay lark of hope, thy silent song
resume!

Ye flattering eastern lights, once more
the hills illumine!

Fresh gales and dews of life's delicious
morn,

And thou, lost fragrance of the heart,
return!

Alas! the little joy to man allowed,
Fades like the lustre of an evening
cloud;

Or like the beauty in a flower installed,
Whose season was, and cannot be re-
called.

Yet, when oppress by sickness, grief, or
care,

And taught that pain is pleasure's
natural heir,

We still confide in more than we can
know;

Death would be else the favourite friend
of woe.

'Mid savage rocks, and seas of snow
that shine,

Between interminable tracts of pine,
Within a temple stands an awful shrine.

By an uncertain light revealed, that falls
On the mute image and the troubled
walls.

Oh! give not me that eye of hard disdain

¹ The well-known effect of the famous air,
called in French *Ranz des Vaches*, upon the
Swiss troops.

That views, undimmed, Einsiedlen's
wretched fane.

While ghastly faces through the gloom
appear,

Abortive joy, and hope that works in
fear;

While prayer contends with silence
agony,

Surely in other thoughts contempt
may die.

If the sad grave of human ignorance
bear

One flower of hope—oh, pass and leave
it there!

The tall sun, passing on an Alpine
spire,

Flings o'er the wilderness a stream of
fire:

Now meet we other pilgrims ere the day
Close on the remnant of their weary
way:

While they are drawing toward the
sacred floor

Where, so they fondly think, the worn
shoes gnaw no more.

How gaily murmur and how sweetly
taste

The fountains reared for them amid
the waste!

Their thirst they slake:—they wash
their toil-worn feet,

And some with tears of joy each other
greet.

Yes, I must see you when ye first behold
Those holy turrets tipped with evening
gold,

In that glad moment will for you a sigh
Be heaved, of charitable sympathy;

In that glad moment when your hands
are prest

In mute devotion on the thankful
breast!

Last, let us turn to Chamouny that
shields

With rocks and gloomy woods her fertile
fields:

Five streams of ice amid her cots descend,
And with wild flowers and blooming
orchards blend;—

A scene more fair than what the Grecian
feigns

Of purple lights and ever-vernal plains;
Here all the seasons revel in hand;

'Mid lawns and shades by breezy rivulets
fanned

² This shrine is resorted to, from a hope of
relief, by multitudes, from every corner of the
Catholic world, labouring under mental or bodily
afflictions.

³ Rude fountains built and covered with
sheds for the accommodation of the Pilgrims, in
their ascent of the mountain.

They sport beneath that mountain's
matchless height
That holds no commerce with the summer
night.

From age to age, throughout his lonely
bounds

The crash of ruin fitfully resounds ;

Appalling havoc ! but serene his brow,

Where daylight lingers on perpetual
snow ;

Glitter the stars above, and all is black
below.

What marvel then if many a Wanderer
sigh,

While roars the sudden Arve in anger by,
That not for thy reward, unrivalled
Vale !

Waves the ripe harvest in the autumnal
gale ;

That thou, the slave of slaves, art doomed
to pine

And droop, while no Italian arts are
thine,

To soothe or cheer, to soften or refine.

Hail Freedom ! whether it was mine
to stray,

With shrill winds whistling round my
lonely way

On the bleak sides of Cumbria's heath-
clad moors,

Or where dank sea-weed lashes Scot-
land's shores ;

To scent the sweets of Piedmont's
breathing rose,

And orange gale that o'er Lugano blows ;
Still have I found, where Tyranny pre-
vails,

That virtue languishes and pleasure
fails,

While the remotest hamlets blessings
share

In thy loved presence known, and only
there ;

Heart-blessings—outward treasures too
which the eye

Of the sun peeping through the clouds
can spy,

And every passing breeze will testify.
There, to the porch, belike with jasmine
bound

Or woodbine wreaths, a smoother path
is wound ;

The housewife there a brighter garden
sees,

Where hum on busier wing her happy
bees ;

On infant cheeks there fresher roses
blow ;

And grey-haired men look up with
livelier brow,—

To greet the traveller needing food and
rest ;

W. P.

Housed for the night, or but a half-
hour's guest.

And oh, fair France ! though now the
traveller sees

Thy three-striped banner fluctuate on
the breeze ;

Though martial songs have banished
songs of love,

And nightingales desert the village
grove,

Scared by the life and rumbling drum's
alarms,

And the short thunder and the flash of
arms ;

That cease not till night falls, when
far and nigh,

Sole sound, the Soud¹ prolongs his
mournful cry !

—Yet, hast thou found that Freedom
spreads her power

Beyond the cottage-hearth, the cottage
door :

All nature smiles, and owns beneath her
eyes

Her fields peculiar, and peculiar skies.
Yes, as I roamed where Loiret's waters
glide

Through rustling aspens heard from side
to side,

When from October clouds a milder
light

Fell where the blue flood rippled into
white ;

Methought from every cot the watchful
bird

Crowed with ear-piercing power till then
unheard ;

Each clacking mill, that broke the
murmuring streams,

Rocked the charmed thought in more
delightful dreams ;

Chasing those pleasant dreams, the
falling leaf

Awoke a fainter sense of moral grief ;
The measured echo of the distant flail

Wound in more welcome cadence down
the vale ;

With more majestic course² the water
rolled,

And ripening foliage shone with richer
gold.

—But foes are gathering—Liberty must
raise

Red on the hills her beacon's far-seen
blaze

¹ An insect so called, which emits a short, melancholy cry, heard at the close of the summer evenings, on the banks of the Loire.

² The duties upon many parts of the French rivers were so exorbitant that the poorer people, deprived of the benefit of water carriage, were obliged to transport their goods by land.

Must bid the tocsin ring from tower to tower !—

Nearer and nearer comes the trying hour !
Rejoice, brave Land, though pride's
perverted ire

Rouse hell's own aid, and wrap thy
fields in fire :

Lo, from the flames a great and glorious
birth ;

As if a new-made heaven were hailing a
new earth !

—All cannot be : the promise is too fair
For creatures doomed to breathe ter-
restrial air ;

Yet not for this will sober reason frown
Upon that promise, nor the hope disown :
She knows that only from high aims
ensue [duc.

Rich guerdons, and to them alone are

Great God ! by whom the strifes of
men are weighed

In an impartial balance, give thine aid
To the just cause ; and, oh ! do thou
preside

Over the mighty stream now spreading
wide :

So shall its waters, from the heavens
supplied

In copious showers, from earth by
wholesome springs,

Brood o'er the long-parched lands
with Nile-like wings ! [clay

And grant that every sceptred child of
Who cries presumptuous, "Here the
flood shall stay,"

May in its progress see thy guiding hand,
And cease the acknowledged purpose to
withstand ;

Or, swept in anger from the insulted
shore,

Sink with his servile bands, to rise no
more !

To-night, my Friend, within this
humble cot

Be scorn and fear and hope alike forgot
In timely sleep ; and when, at break of
day, [play,

On the tall peaks the glistening sunbeams
With a light heart our course we may
renew,

The first whose footsteps print the
mountain dew.

1791 and 1792.

VII

LINES

Left upon a Seat in a Yew-tree, which stands
near the lake of Esthwaite, on a desolate
part of the shore, commanding a beautiful
prospect.

Nay, Traveller ! rest. This lonely Yew-
tree stands

Far from all human dwelling : what if
here

No sparkling rivulet spread the verdant
herb ?

What if the bee love not these barren
boughs ?

Yet, if the wind breathe soft, the curling
waves,

That break against the shore, shall lull
thy mind

By one soft impulse saved from vacancy.
—Who he was

That piled these stones and with the
mossy sod

First covered, and here taught this aged
Tree

With its dark arms to form a circling
bower,

I well remember.—He was one who
owned

No common soul. In youth by science
nursed,

And led by nature into a wild scene
Of lofty hopes, he to the world went forth

A favoured Being, knowing no desire
Which genius did not hallow ; 'gainst
the taint

Of dissolute tongues, and jealousy, and
hate

And scorn,—against all enemies prepared
All but neglect. The world, for so it
thought,

Owed him no service ; wherefore he at
once

With indignation turned himself away,
And with the food of pride sustained his
soul

In solitude.—Stranger ! these gloomy
boughs

Had charms for him ; and here he loved
to sit,

His only visitants a straggling sheep,
The stone-chat, or the glancing sand-
piper :

And on these barren rocks, with fern
and heath,

And juniper and thistle, sprinkled o'er,
Fixing his downcast eye, he many an
hour

A morbid pleasure nourished, tracing
here

An emblem of his own unfruitful life :
And, lifting up his head, he then would
gaze

On the more distant scene,—how lovely
'tis

Thou seest,—and he would gaze till it
became

Far lovelier, and his heart could not
sustain

The beauty, still more beautiful,
Nor, that time, [self,

When nature had subdued him to her

Would he forget those Beings to whose
 Warm from the labours of benevolence
 The world, and human life, appeared
 Of kindred loveliness: then he would
 sigh,
 "Inly disturbed, to think that others
 felt
 What he must never feel: and so,
 lost Man!
 One visionary views would fancy feed,
 Till his eye streamed with tears. In
 this deep vale."
 He died,—this seat his only monument.

If Thou be one whose heart the holy
 forms
 Of young imagination have kept pure,
 Stranger! henceforth be warned; and
 know that pride,
 Howe'er disguised in its own majesty,
 Is littleness; that he who feels con-
 tempt
 For any living thing, hath faculties
 Which he has never used; that thought
 with him.
 Is in its infancy. The man whose eye
 Is ever on himself doth look on one,
 The least of Nature's works, one who
 might move
 The wise man to that scorn which
 wisdom holds
 Unlawful, ever. O be wiser, Thou!
 Instructed that true knowledge leads to
 love;
 True dignity abides with him alone
 Who, in the silent hour of inward thought
 Can still suspect, and still revere himself,
 In lowliness of heart.

1795.

VIII
 GUILT AND SORROW:
 OR, INCIDENTS UPON SALISBURY PLAIN
 ADVERTISEMENT,

FIXED TO THE FIRST EDITION OF THIS
 POEM, PUBLISHED IN 1842.
 Not less than one-third of the following poem,
 though it has from time to time been altered in the
 expression, was published so far back as the year
 1795, under the title of "The Female Vagrant."
 The extract is of such length that an apology
 seems to be required for reprinting it here: but
 it was necessary to restore it to its original posi-
 tion, or the text would have been unintelligible.
 The whole was written before the close of the
 year 1794, and I will detail, rather as a matter
 of literary biography than for any other reason,
 the circumstances under which it was produced.
 During the latter part of the summer of 1793,
 having passed a month in the Isle of Wight, in
 view of the fleet which was then preparing for
 sea at Portsmouth at the commencement of the
 war, I left the place with melancholy forebodings.

The American war was still fresh in memory.
 The struggle which was beginning, and which
 many thought would be brought to a speedy
 close by the irresistible arms of Great Britain
 being added to those of the allies, I was assured
 in my own mind would be of long continuance,
 and productive of distress and misery beyond
 all possible calculation. This conviction was
 pressed upon me by having been a witness,
 during a long residence in revolutionary France,
 of the spirit which prevailed in that country.
 After leaving the Isle of Wight, I spent two days
 in wandering on foot over Salisbury Plain, which,
 though cultivation was then widely spread
 through parts of it, had upon the whole a still
 more impressive appearance than it now retains.

The monuments and traces of antiquity,
 scattered in abundance over that region, led me
 unavoidably to compare what we know or guess
 of those remote times with certain aspects of
 modern society, and with calamities, principally
 those consequent upon war, to which, more than
 other classes of men, the poor are subject. In
 these reflections, joined with particular facts
 that had come to my knowledge, the following
 stanzas originated.

In conclusion, to obviate some distraction in
 the minds of those who are well acquainted with
 Salisbury Plain, it may be proper to say, that of
 the features described as belonging to it, one or
 two are taken from other desolate parts of
 England.

I
 A TRAVELLER on the skirt of Sarum's
 Plain
 Pursued his vagrant way, with feet half
 bare;
 Stooping his gait, but not as if to gain
 Help from the staff he bore; for mien
 and air
 Were hardy, though his cheek seemed
 worn with care
 Both of the time to come, and time long
 fled:
 Down fell in straggling locks his thin
 grey hair;
 A coat he wore of military red
 But faded, and stuck o'er with many a
 patch and shred.

While thus he journeyed, step by step
 led on,
 He saw and passed a stately inn, full sure
 That welcome in such house for him
 was none.
 No board inscribed the needy to allure
 Hung there, no bush proclaimed to old
 and poor
 And desolate, "Here you will find a
 friend!"
 The pendent grapes glittered above the
 door:—
 On he must pace, perchance 'till night
 descend,
 Where'er the dreary roads their bare
 white lines extend.

The gathering clouds grew red with
stormy fire,
In streaks diverging wide and mounting
high;
That inn he long had passed; the distant
spire,
Which oft as he looked back had fixed
his eye,
Was lost, though still he looked, in the
blank sky.
Perplexed and comfortless he gazed
around,
And scarce could any trace of man descrie;
Save cornfields stretched and stretching
without bound;
But where the sower dwelt was nowhere
to be found.

IV

No tree was there, no meadow's pleasant
green,
No brook to wet his lip or soothe his ear;
Long files of corn-stacks here and there
were seen,
But not one dwelling-place his heart to
cheer.
Some labourer, thought he, may per-
chance be near;
And so he sent a feeble shout—in vain;
No voice made answer, he could only
hear
Winds rustling over plots of unripe
grain,
Or whistling thro' thin grass along the
unfurrowed plain.

V

Long had he fancied each successive
slope
Concealed some cottage, whither he
might turn
And rest; but now, along heaven's
darkening cope
The crows rushed by in eddies, home-
ward borne.
Thus warned he sought some shepherd's
spreading thorn [head,
Or hovel from the storm to shield his
But sought in vain; for now, all wild,
forlorn,
And vacant, a huge waste around him
spread;
The wet cold ground, he feared, must
be his only bed.

VI

And be it so—for to the chill night
shower
And the sharp wind his head he oft hath
bared;
A sailor he, who many a wretched hour
hath told; for, landing after labour
hard.

Full long endured in hope of just reward,
He to an armed fleet was forced away
By seamen, who perhaps themselves had
shared
Like fate; was hurried off, a helpless
prey,
'Gainst all that in his heart, or theirs
perhaps, said nay.

VII

For years the work of carnage did not
cease,
And death's dire aspect daily he sur-
veyed,
Death's minister; then came his glad
release,
And hope returned, and pleasure fondly
made
Her dwelling in his dreams. By Fancy's
aid
The happy husband flies, his arms to
throw
Round his wife's neck; the prize of
victory laid
In her will lap, he sees such sweet tear-
flow
As if thenceforth for pain nor trouble
she could know.

VIII

Vain hope! for fraud took all that he
had earned.
The lion roars and gluts his tawny brood
Even in the desert's heart; but he,
returned,
Bears not to those he loves their needful
food.
His home approaching, but in such a
mood
That from his sight his children might
have run,
He met a traveller, robbed him, shed
his blood;
And when the miserable work was done
He fled, a vagrant since, the murderer's
fate to shun.

IX

From that day forth no place to him
could be
So lonely, but that thence might come a
pang
Brought from without to inward misery.
Now, as he plodded on, with sullen
clang
A sound of chains along the desert rang;
He looked, and saw upon a gibbet high
A human body that in irons swang,
Uplifted by the tempest whirling by;
And, hovering, round it often did a raven
fly.

X

It was a spectacle which none might view,
In spot so savage, but with shuddering
pain;

Nor only did for him at once renew
 All he had feared from man, but roused a
 train
 Of the mind's phantoms, horrible as
 vain:
 The stones, as if to cover him from day,
 Rolled at his back along the living plain;
 He fell, and without sense or motion lay;
 But, when the trance was gone, feebly
 pursued his way.

x

As one whose brain habitual phrensy
 fires
 Owes to the fit in which his soul hath
 tossed
 Profounder quiet, when the fit retires,
 Even so the dire phantasma which had
 crossed
 His sense, in sudden vacancy quite lost,
 Left his mind still as a deep evening
 stream.
 Nor, if accosted now, in thought en-
 grossed,
 Moody, or mly troubled, would he seem
 To traveller who might talk of any
 casual theme.

xii

Hurtle the clouds in deeper darkness
 spilled,
 Gone is the raven timely rest to seek;
 He seemed the only creature in the wild
 On whom the elements their rage might
 wreak;
 Save that the bustard, of those regions
 bleak
 Shy tenant, seeing by the uncertain light
 A man there wandering, gave a mournful
 shriek,
 And half upon the ground, with strange
 affright,
 Forced hard against the wind a thick
 unwieldy flight.

xiii

All, all was cheerless to the horizon's
 bound; [strays.
 One weary eye—which, wheresoe'er it
 Marks nothing but the red sun's setting
 round,
 Or on the earth strange lines, in former
 days
 Left by gigantic arms—at length surveys
 What seems an antique castle spreading
 wide;
 Hoary and naked are its walls, and raise
 Their brow sublime; in shelter there to
 bide
 He turned, while rain poured down
 smoking on every side.

xiv

File of Stone-henge! so proud to hint
 yet keep

Thy secrets, thou that lov'st to stand
 and hear
 The Plain resounding to the whirlwind's
 sweep,
 Inmate of lonesome Nature's endless
 year;
 Even if thou saw'st the giant wicker rear
 For sacrifice its throngs of living men,
 Before thy face did ever wretch appear,
 Who in his heart had groaned with
 deadlier pain
 Than he who, tempest-driven, thy
 shelter now would gain.

xv

Within that fabric of mysterious form,
 Winds met in conflict, each by turns
 supreme;
 And, from the perilous ground dislodged,
 through storm
 And rain he wildered on, no moon to
 stream
 From gulf of parting clouds one friendly
 beam,
 Nor any friendly sound his footsteps
 led;
 Once did the lightning's faint disastrous
 gleam
 Disclose a naked guide-post's double
 head,
 Sight which tho' lost at once a gleam
 of pleasure shed.

xvi

No swinging sign-board creaked from
 cottage elm
 To stay his steps with faintness over-
 come;
 'Twas dark and void as ocean's watery
 realm
 Roaring with storms beneath night's
 starless gloom;
 No gipsy cower'd o'er fire of furze or
 broom;
 No labourer watched his red kiln glaring
 bright,
 Nor taper glimmered dim from sick
 man's room; [light
 Along the waste no line of mournful
 From lamp of lonely toll-gate streamed
 athwart the night.

xvii

At length, though hid in clouds, the moon
 arose;
 And downs were visible—and now
 revealed
 A structure stands, which two bare
 slopes enclose.
 It was a spot, where, ancient vows
 fulfilled,
 Kind pious hands did to the Virgin build
 A lonely Spital, the belated swain

From the night terrors of that waste to shield;
But there no human being could remain,
And now the walls are named the "Dead House" of the plain.

XVIII

Though he had little cause to love the abode
Of man, or covet sight of mortal face,
Yet when faint beams of light that ruin showed,
How glad he was at length to find some trace
Of human shelter in that dreary place.
Till to his flock the early shepherd goes,
Here shall much-needed sleep his frame embrace.
In a dry nook where fern the floor bestrows
He lays his stiffened limbs,—his eyes begin to close;

XIX

When hearing a deep sigh, that seemed to come
From one who mourned in sleep, he raised his head,
And saw a woman in the naked room
Outstretched, and turning on a restless bed;
The moon a wan dead light around her shed.
He waked her—spake in tone that would not fail,
He hoped, to calm her mind; but ill he sped,
For of that ruin she had heard a tale
Which now with freezing thoughts did all her powers assail;

XX

Had heard of one who, forced from storms to shroud,
Felt the loose walls of this decayed Retreat
Rock to incessant neighings shrill and loud,
While his horse pawed the floor with furious heat;
Till on a stone, that sparkled to his feet,
Struck, and still struck again, the troubled horse:
The man half raised the stone with pain and sweat,
Half raised, for well his arm might lose its force
Disclosing the grim head of a late murdered corse.

XXI

Such tale of this lone mansion she had learned
And, when that shape, with eyes in sleep half drowned,

By the moon's sullen lamp she first discerned,
Cold stony horror all her senses bound.
Her he addressed in words of cheering sound;
Recovering heart, like answer did she make;
And well it was that, of the corpse there found,
In converse that ensued she nothing spake;
She knew not what dire pangs in him, such tale could wake.

XXII

But soon his voice and words of kind intent
Banished that dismal thought; and now the wind
In fainter howlings told its rage was spent:
Meanwhile discourse ensued of various kind,
Which by degrees a confidence of mind
And mutual interest failed not to create.
And, to a natural sympathy resigned,
In that forsaken building where they sat
The Woman thus retraced her own untoward fate.

XXIII

"By Derwent's side my father dwelt—a man
Of virtuous life, by pious parents bred;
And I believe that, soon as I began
To sp, he made me kneel beside my bed,
And in his hearing there my prayers I said:
And afterwards, by my good father taught,
I read, and loved the books in which I read;
For books in every neighbouring house I sought,
And nothing to my mind a sweeter pleasure brought.

XXIV

A little croft we owned—a plot of corn,
A garden stored with peas, and mint, and thyme,
And flowers for posies, oft on Sunday
Plucked while the church bells rang their earliest chime.
Can I forget our freaks at shearing time!
My hen's rich nest through long grass scarce espied;
The cowslip-gathering in June's dewy prime;
The swans that with white chests up-reared in pride
Rushing and racing came to meet me at the water-side!

xxv

The staff I well remember which upbore
 The bending body of my active sire;
 His seat beneath the honied sycamore
 Where the bees hummed, and chair by
 winter fire;
 When market-morning came, the neat
 attire
 With which, though bent on haste,
 myself I decked;
 Our watchful house-dog, that would
 tease and tire
 The stranger till its barking-fit I checked;
 The red-breast, known for years, which
 at my casement pecked.

xxvi

The suns of twenty summers danced
 along,—
 Too little marked how fast they rolled
 away:
 But, through severe mischance and
 cruel wrong,
 My father's substance fell into decay;
 We toiled and struggled, hoping for a
 day
 When Fortune might put on a kinder
 look;
 But vain were wishes, efforts vain as
 they;
 He from his old hereditary nook
 Must part; the summons came;—our
 final leave we took.

xxvii

It was indeed a miserable hour
 When, from the last hill-top, my sire
 surveyed,
 Peering above the trees, the steeple
 tower
 That on his marriage day sweet music
 made!
 Till then, he hoped his bones might there
 be laid
 Close by my mother in their native
 bowers;
 Holding me trust in God, he stood and
 prayed;—
 I could not pray;—through tears that
 fell in showers
 Glimmered our dear-loved home, alas!
 no longer ours!

xxviii

There was a Youth whom I had loved so
 long,
 That when I loved him not I cannot
 say;
 Mid the green mountains many a thought-
 less song
 We two had sung, like gladsome birds in
 May;
 When we began to tire of childish play,

We seemed still more and more to prize
 each other;
 We talked of marriage and our marriage
 day;
 And I in truth did love him like a
 brother,
 For never could I hope to meet with such
 another.

xxix

Two years were passed since to a distant
 town
 He had repaired to ply a gainful trade:
 What tears of bitter grief, till then
 unknown!
 What tender vows our last sad kiss
 delayed!
 To him we turned:—we had no other
 aid:
 Like one revived, upon his neck I wept;
 And her whom he had loved in joy, he
 said,
 He well could love in grief; his faith
 he kept;
 And in a quiet home once more my
 father slept.

xxx

We lived in peace and comfort; and were
 blest
 With daily bread, by constant toil
 supplied.
 Three lovely babes had lain upon my
 breast:
 And often, viewing their sweet smiles, I
 sighed,
 And knew not why. My happy father
 died,
 When threatened war reduced the
 children's meal:
 Thrice happy! that for him the grave
 could hide
 The empty loom, cold hearth, and silent
 wheel,
 And tears that flowed for ills which
 patience might not heal.

xxxi

'Twas a hard change; an evil time was
 come;
 We had no hope, and no relief could
 gain:
 But soon, with proud parade, the noisy
 drum
 Beat round to clear the streets of want
 and pain.
 My husband's arms now only served to
 strain
 Me and his children hungering in his
 view;
 In such dismay my prayers and tears
 were vain:
 To join those miserable men he flew,
 And now to the sea-coast, with numbers
 more, we drew.

XXXII

There were we long neglected, and we bore
 Much sorrow ere the fleet its anchor weighed;
 Green fields before us, and our native shore,
 We breathed a pestilential air, that made
 Ravage for which no knell was heard.
 We prayed
 For our departure; wished and wished
 —nor knew,
 'Mid that long sickness and those hopes delayed,
 That happier days we never more must view.
 The parting signal streamed—at last
 the land withdrew.

XXXIII

But the calm summer season now was past.
 On as we drove, the equinoctial deep
 Ran mountains high before the howling blast,
 And many perished in the whirlwind's sweep.
 We gazed with terror on their gloomy sleep,
 Untaught that soon such anguish must ensue,
 Our hopes such harvest of affliction reap,
 That we the mercy of the waves should rue:
 We reached the western world, a poor
 devoted crew.

XXXIV

The plains and plagues that on our heads came down,
 Disease and famine, agony and fear,
 In wood or wilderness, in camp or town,
 It would unman the firmest heart to hear.
 All perished—all in one remorseless year,
 Husband and children! one by one, by sword
 And ravenous plague, all perished:
 every tear
 Dried up, despairing, desolate, on board
 A British ship I waked, as from a trance
 restored."

XXXV

Here paused she of all present thought
 forlorn,
 Nor voice, nor sound, that moment's
 pain expressed,
 Yet Nature, with excess of grief o'er-
 borne,
 From her full eyes their watery load
 released.
 He too was mute; and, ere her weeping
 ceased,

Herose, and to the ruin's portal went,
 And saw the dawn opening the silvery
 east.
 With rays of promise, north and south-
 ward sent;
 And soon with crimson fire kindled the
 firmament.

XXXVI

"O come," he cried, "come, after
 weary night
 Of such rough storm, this happy change
 to view."
 So forth she came, and eastward looked
 the sight
 Over her brow like dawn of gladness
 threw;
 Upon her cheek, to which its youthful
 hue
 Seemed to return, dried the last linger-
 ing tear,
 And from her grateful heart a fresh op-
 drew:
 The whilst her comrade to her pensive
 cheer
 Tempered fit words of hope; and the
 lark warbled near."

XXXVII

They looked and saw a lengthening road,
 and wain
 That rang down a bare slope not far
 remote:
 The barrows glistened bright with drops
 of rain,
 Whistled the waggoner with merry note,
 The cock far off sounded his clarion
 throat;
 But town, or farm, or hamlet, none they
 viewed,
 Only were told there stood a lonely cot
 A long mile thence. While thither they
 pursued
 Their way, the Woman thus her mourn-
 ful tale renewed.

XXXVIII

"Peaceful as this immeasurable plain
 Is now, by beams of dawning light
 imprest,
 In the calm sunshine slept the glittering
 main;
 The very ocean hath its hour of rest.
 I too forgot the heavings of my breast.
 How quiet 'round me ship and ocean
 were!
 As quiet all within me. I was blest,
 And looked, and fed upon the silent air
 Until it seemed to bring a joy to my
 despair."

XXXIX

Ah! how unlike those late terrific sleeps,
 And groans that rage of racking famine
 spoke;

The unburied dead that lay in festering
 heaps,
 The breathing pestilence that rose like
 smoke,
 The shriek that from the distant battle
 broke,
 The mine's dire earthquake, and the
 pallid host
 Driven by the bomb's incessant thunder-
 stroke
 To loathsome vaults, where heart-sick
 anguish tossed,
 Hope died, and fear itself in agony was
 lost!

XL

Some mighty gulf of separation past,
 I seemed transported to another world;
 A thought resigned with pain, when from
 the mast
 The impatient mariner the sail unfurled,
 And, whistling, called the wind that
 hardly curled
 The silent sea. From the sweet thoughts
 of home
 And from all hope I was for ever hurled.
 For me—farthest from earthly port to
 roam
 Was best, could I but shun the spot
 where man might come.

And oft I thought (my fancy was so
 strong)
 That I, at last, a resting-place had
 found;
 'Here will I dwell,' said I, 'my whole
 life long,
 Roaming the illimitable waters round;
 Here will I live, of all but heaven dis-
 owned,
 And end my days upon the peaceful
 flood.'
 To break my dream the vessel reached
 its bound;
 And homeless near a thousand homes I
 stood,
 And near a thousand tables pined and
 wanted food.

No help I sought; in sorrow turned
 adrift,
 Was hopeless, as if cast on some bare
 rock;
 Nor morsel to my mouth that day did
 lift,
 Nor raised my hand at any door to
 knock.
 I lay where, with his drowsy mates, the
 oock
 From the cross-timber of an out-house
 hung
 Dismally told, that night, the city

At more my sick heart hunger scarpely
 stung,
 Nor to the beggar's language could I
 fit my tongue.

XLIII

So passed a second day; and, when the
 third
 Was come, I tried in vain the crowd's
 resort.
 —In deep despair, by frightful wishes
 stirred,
 Near the sea-side I reached a ruined
 fort;
 There, pains which nature could no
 more support,
 With blindness linked, did on my vitals
 fall;
 And, after many interruptions short
 Of hideous sense, I sank, nor step could
 crawl:
 Unsought for was the help that did my
 life recal.

Borne to a hospital, I lay with brain
 Drowsy and weak, and shattered memory;
 I heard my neighbours in their beds
 complain
 Of many things which never troubled
 me—
 Of feet still bustling round with busy
 glee,
 Of looks where common kindness had
 no part,
 Of service done with cold formality.
 Fretting the fever round the languid
 heart,
 And groans which, as they said, might
 make a dead man start.

XLV

These things just served to stir the
 slumbering sense,
 Nor pain nor pity in my bosom raised.
 With strength did memory return; and,
 thence
 Dismissed, again on open day I gazed,
 At houses, men, and common light,
 amazed.
 The lanes I sought, and, as the sun
 retired,
 Came where beneath the trees a faggot
 blazed;
 The travellers saw me weep, my fate
 inquired,
 And gave me food—and rest, more
 welcome, more desired.

XLVI

Rough potters seemed they, trading
 soberly
 With panniered asses driven from door
 to door;
 But life of happier sort set forth to me,

And other joys my fancy to allure—
The bag-pipe dinning on the midnight
In barn uplighted; and companions
Well met from far with revelry secure
Among the forest glades, while jocund
Rolled fast along the sky his warm and
genial moon.

XLVII

But all they suited me—those journeys
dark
O'er moor and mountain, midnight theft
To charm the surly house-dog's faithful
bark,
Or hang on tip-toe at the lifted latch.
The gloomy lantern, and the dim blue
match,
The black disguise, the warning whistle
shrill,
And ear still busy on its nightly watch,
Were not for me, brought up in nothing
ill:
Besides, on griefs so fresh my thoughts
were brooding still.

XLVIII

What could I do, unaided and unblest?
My father! gone was every friend of
thine:
And kindred of dead husband are at best
Small help; and, after marriage such
as mine,
With little kindness would to me incline.
Nor was I then for toil or service fit;
My deep-drawn sighs no effort could
confine;
In open air forgetful would I sit
Whole hours, with idle arms in moping
sorrow knit.

XLIX

The roads I paced, I loltered through the
fields;
Contentedly, yet sometimes self-accused,
Trusted my life to what chance bounty
yields,
Now coldly given, now utterly refused.
The ground I for my bed have often used:
But what afflicts my peace with keenest
ruth,
Is that I have my inner self abused,
Foregone the home delight of constant
truth,
And clear and open soul, so prized in
fearless youth.

L

Through tears the rising sun I oft have
viewed,
Through tears have seen him towards
that world descend

Where my poor heart lost all its forti-
tude:
Three years a wanderer now my course
I bend—
Oh! tell me whither—for no earthly
friend
Have I."—She ceased, and weeping
turned away;
As if because her tale was at an end,
She wept; because she had no more to
say
Of that perpetual weight which on her
spirit lay.

True sympathy the Sailor's looks ex-
pressed.
His looks—for pondering he was mute
the while.
Of social Order's care for wretchedness,
Of Time's sure help to calm and re-
concile,
Joy's second spring and Hope's long-
treasured smile,
'Twas not for him to speak—a man so
tried.
Yet, to relieve her heart, in friendly
style
Proverbial words of comfort he applied,
And not in vain, while they went pacing
side by side.

LII

Ere long, from heaps of turf, before their
sight,
Together smoking in the sun's slant
beam,
Rise various wreaths that into one unite
Which high and higher mounts with
silver gleam:
Fair spectacle,—but instantly a scream
Thence bursting shrill did all remark
prevent;
They paused, and heard a hoarser voice
blaspheme,
And female cries. Their course they
thither bent,
And met a man who foamed with anger
vehement.

LIII

A woman stood with quivering lips and
pale,
And, pointing to a little child that lay
stretched on the ground, began a piteous
tale;
How in a simple freak of thoughtless
play
He had provoked his father, who straight-
way,
As if each blow were deadlier than the
last,
Struck the poor innocent. Palid with
dismay

The Soldier's Widow heard and stood
 aghast;
 And stern looks on the man her grey-
 haired Comrade cast.

LIV

His voice with indignation rising high
 Such further deed in manhood's name
 forbade;
 The peasant, wild in passion, made reply
 With bitter insult and revilings sad;
 Asked him in scorn what business there
 he had:

What kind of plunder he was hunting
 now;
 The gallows would one day of him be
 glad:—
 Though inward anguish damped the
 Sailor's brow,
 Yet calm he seemed as thoughts so
 poignant would allow.

LV

Softly he stroked the child, who lay
 outstretched
 With face to earth; and, as the boy
 turned round
 His battered head, a groan the Sailor
 fetched
 As if he saw—there and upon that
 ground—
 Strange repetition of the deadly wound
 He had himself inflicted. Through his
 brain
 At once the griding iron passage found;
 Deluge of tender thoughts then rushed
 again,
 Nor could his sunken eyes the starting
 tear restrain.

LVI

Within himself he said—What hearts
 have we!
 The blessing this a father gives his child!
 Yet happy thou, poor boy! compared
 with me,
 Suffering not doing ill—fate far more
 mild.
 The stranger's looks and tears of wrath
 beguiled
 The other's and relenting thoughts
 awoke;
 He kissed his son—so all was reconciled,
 Then, with a voice which inward trouble
 broke
 Ere to his lips it came, the Sailor then
 bespoke.

LVII

"Bad is the world, and hard is the
 world's law
 Even for the man who wears the warm-
 est fleece;
 Much need have ye that time more
 closely draw

The bond of nature, all unkindness cease,
 And that among so few there still be
 peace:

Else can ye hope but with such numerous
 foes

Your pains shall ever with your years
 increase?"—

While from his heart the appropriate
 lesson flows,

A correspondent calm stole gently o'er
 his woes.

LVIII

Forthwith the pair passed on: and
 down they look

Into a narrow valley's pleasant scene
 Where wreaths of vapour tracked a
 winding brook,

That babbled on through groves and
 meadows green;

A low-roofed house peeped out the trees
 between;

The dripping groves resound with cheer-
 ful lays,

And melancholy lowings intervene
 Of scattered herds, that in the meadow
 graze,

Some amid lingering shade, some touched
 by the sun's rays.

LIX

They saw and heard, and, winding with
 the road

Down a thick wood, they dropt into the
 vale;

Comfort by prouder mansions unbe-
 stowed

Their wearied frames, she hoped, would
 soon regale.

Erelong they reached that cottage in
 the dale:

It was a rustic inn;—the board was
 spread,

The milk-maid followed with her brim-
 ming pail,

And lustily the master carved the bread.
 Kindly the housewife pressed, and they
 in comfort fed.

LX

Their breakfast done, the pair, though
 loth, must part;

Wanderers whose course no longer now
 agrees.

She rose and bade farewell! and, while
 her heart

Struggled with tears nor could its sorrow
 ease,

She left him there; for, clustering round
 his knees,

With his oak-staff the cottage children
 played;

And soon she reached a spot o'erhung
 with trees

And banks of ragged earth ; beneath
the shade
Across the pebbly road a little runnel
strayed.

LXI

A cart and horse beside the rivulet
stood ;
Chequering the canvas roof the sun-
beams shone.
She saw the carman bend to scoop the
flood
As the wain fronted her,—wherein lay
one,
A pale-faced Woman, in disease far gone.
The carman wet her lips as well behaved ;
Bed under her lean body there was none,
Though even to die near one she most
had loved
She could not of herself those wasted
limbs have moved.

LXII

The Soldier's Widow learned with honest
pain
And homefelt force of sympathy sincere,
Why thus that worn-out wretch must
there sustain
The jolting road and morning air severe.
The wain pursued its way ; and follow-
ing near
In pure compassion she her steps re-
traced
Far as the cottage. " A sad sight is
here,"
She cried aloud ; and forth ran out in
haste
The friends whom she had left but a few
minutes past.

LXIII

While to the door with eager speed they
ran,
From her bare straw the Woman half
upraised [wan ;
Her bony visage—gaunt and deadly
No pity asking, on the group she gazed
With a dim eye, distracted and amazed ;
Then sank upon her straw with feeble
moan.
Fervently cried the housewife—" God
be praised,
I have a house that I can call my own ;
Nor shall she perish there, untended
and alone !"

LXIV

So in they bear her to the chimney seat,
And busily, though yet with fear, untie
Her garments, and, to warm her icy feet
And chafe her temples, careful hands
apply.
Nature reviving, with a deep-drawn sigh
She strove, and not in vain, her head
to rear ;

Then said—" I thank you all ; if I must
die,
The God in heaven my prayers for you
will hear ;
Till now I did not think my end had
been so near.

LXV

" Barred every comfort labour could
procure,
Suffering what no endurance could
assuage,
I was compelled to seek my father's God,
Though loth to be a burthen on his age.
But sickness stopped me in an early
stage
Of my sad journey ; and within the wain
They placed me—there to end life's
pilgrimage,
Unless beneath your roof I may remain :
For I shall never see my father's door
again.

LXVI

" My life, Heaven knows, hath long
been burthensome ;
But, if I have not meekly suffered, meek
May my end be ! Soon Will this voice
be dumb :
Should thild of mine e'er wander hither,
speak
Of me, say that the worm is on my
cheek.—
Torn from our hut, that stood beside
the sea
Near Portland lighthouse in a lonesome
creek,
My husband served in sad captivity
On shipboard, bound till peace or death
should set him free.

LXVII

" A sailor's wife I knew a widow's cares,
Yet two sweet little ones partook my
bed ;
Hope cheered my dreams, and to my
daily prayers
Our heavenly Father granted each day's
bread ;
Till one was found by stroke of violence
dead, [to lie
Whose body near our cottage chanced
A dire suspicion drove us from our shed ;
In vain to find a friendly face we try,
N'er could we live together those poor
boys and I ;

LXVIII

" For evil tongues made oath how on
that day
My husband lurked about the neigh-
bourhood ;
Now he had fled, and whither none could
say,
And he had done the deed in the dark

Near his own home!—but he was mild
and good;
Never on earth was gentler creature
seen;
He'd not have robbed the raven of its
food.
My husband's loving kindness stood
between
Me and all worldly harms and wrongs
however keen."

LXIX

Alas! the thing she told with labouring
breath
The Sailor knew too well. That wicked-
ness
His hand had wrought; and "when, in
the hour of death,
He saw his Wife's lips move his name
to bless
With her last words, unable to suppress
His anguish, with his heart he ceased to
strive; [tress,
And, weeping loud in this extreme dis-
He cried—"Do pity me! That thou
should'st live
I neither ask nor wish—forgive me, but
forgive!"

LXX

To tell the change that Voice within her
wrought
Nature by sign or sound made no essay;
A sudden joy surprised expiring thought,
And every mortal pang dissolved away.
Borne gently to a bed, in death she lay;
Yet still while over her the husband bent,
A look was in her face which seemed to
say,
"Be blest; by sight of thee from heaven
was sent
Peace to my parting soul, the fulness of
content."

LXXI

She slept in peace,—his pulses throbbed
and stopped,
Breathless he gazed upon her face,—
then took
Her hand in his, and raised it, but both
dropped,
When on his own he cast a rueful look.
His ears were never silent; sleep forsook
His burning eyelids stretched and stiff
as lead;
All night from time to time under him
shook

The floor as he lay shuddering on his
bed;
And oft he groaned aloud, "O God, that
I were dead!"

LXXII

The Soldier's Widow lingered in the cot;
And, when he rose, he thanked her pious
care
Through which his Wife, to that kind
, shelter brought,
Died in his arms; and with those thanks
a prayer
He breathed for her, and for that merci-
ful pair.
The corse interred, not one hour he re-
mained
Beneath their roof, but to the open air
A burthen, now with fortitude sustained,
He bore within a breast where dreadful
quiet reigned.

LXXIII

Confirmed of purpose, fearlessly prepared
For act and suffering, to the city straight
He journeyed, and forthwith his crime
declared:
"And from your doom," he added,
"now I wait,
Nor let it linger long, the murderer's
fate."
Not ineffectual was that piteous claim:
"O welcome sentence which will end
though late,"
He said, "the pangs that to my con-
science came
Out of that deed. My trust, Saviour!
is in Thy name!"

LXXIV

His fate was pitied. Him in iron case
(Reader, forgive the intolerable thought)
They hung not:—no one on his form or
face
Could gaze, as on a show by idlers sought;
No kindred sufferer, to his death-place
brought
By lawless curiosity or chance,
When into storm the evening sky is
wrought,
Upon his swinging corse an eye can
glance,
And drop, as he once dropped, in miser-
able trance.

THE BORDERERS

A TRAGEDY

(COMPOSED 1795-6)

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ

MARMADUKE.

OSWALD.

WALLACE.

LACY.

LENNOX.

HERBERT.

WILFRED, Servant to MARMADUKE.

Host.

Forester.

ELDRÉD, a Peasant.

Peasant, Pilgrims, etc.

IDONEA.

Female Beggar.

ELEANOR, Wife to ELDRÉD.

SCENE, *Borders of England and Scotland.***Time, the Reign of Henry III.*

READERS already acquainted with my Poems will recognise, in the following composition, some eight or ten lines, which I have not scrupled to retain in the places where they originally stood. It is proper however to add, that they would not have been used elsewhere, if I had foreseen the time when I might be induced to publish this Tragedy.

February 28, 1842.

ACT I

SCENE, *road in a Wood.*

WALLACE and LACEY.

Lacy. The Troop will be impatient;
let us his

Back to our post, and strip the Scottish
Foray

Of their rich Spoil, ere they recross the
Border.

—Pity that our young Chief will have
no part

In this good service.

Wal. Rather let us grieve
That, in the undertaking which has

caused
His absence, he hath sought, whate'er

his aim,
Companionship with One of crooked

ways,
From whose perverted soul can come no

good
To our confiding, open-hearted, Leader.

Lacy. True; and, remembering how
the Band have proved

That Oswald finds small favour in our
sight,

Well may we wonder he has gained such
power

Over our much-loved Captain.

Wal. I have heard
Of some dark deed to which in early life

His passion drove him—then a Voyager
Upon the midland Sea. You knew his

bearing
In Palestine?

Lacy. Where he despised alike
Mohammedan and Christian. But

enough;
Let us begone—the Band may else be

folded.

Enter MARMADUKE and WILFRED

Wil. Be cautious, my dear Master!

Mar. I perceive
That fear is like a cloak which old men

huddle
About their love, as if to keep it warm.

Wil. Nay, but I grieve that we should
part. This Stranger,

For such he is—

Mar. Your busy fancies, Wilfred,
Might tempt me to a smile; but what

of him?

Wil. You know that you have saved
his life.

Mar. I know it.

Wil. And that he hates you!—Pardon
me, perhaps

That word was hasty.

Mar. Py! no more of it.

Wil. Dear Master! gratitude's a
heavy burden

To a proud Soul.—Nobody loves this
Oswald—

Yourself, you do not love him.

Mar. I do more,
I honour him. Strong feelings to his

heart
Are natural; and from no one can be

learnt
More of man's thoughts and ways than

his experience
Has given him power to teach; and

then for courage
And enterprise—what perils hath he

shunned? [come?
What obstacles hath he failed to over-
Answer these questions, from our com-
mon knowledge,
And be at rest.

Wil. Oh, Sir!
Mar. Peace, my good Wilfred!

[Exeunt.

Repeat to Liddesdale, and tell the Band
I shall be with them in two days, at
farthest.

Wd. May He whose eye is over all
protect you! [Exit.]

Enter OSWALD (a bunch of plants in his hand).

Osw. This wood is rich in plants and
curious simples.

Mar. (looking at them). The wild
rose, and the poppy, and the night-
shade:

Which is your favourite, Oswald?

Osw. That which, while it is
Strong to destroy, is also strong to
heal— [Looking forward.]

Not yet in sight!—We'll saunter here
awhile;

They cannot mount the hill, by us un-
seen.

Mar. (a letter in his hand). It is no
common thing when one like you
Performs these delicate services, and
therefore

I feel myself much bounden to you,
Oswald;

'Tis a strange letter this!—You saw
her write it?

Osw. And saw the tears with which
she blotted it.

Mar. And nothing less would satisfy
him?

Osw. No less;
For that another in his Child's affection
Should hold a place, as if 'twere robbery;
He seemed to quarrel with the very
thought.

Besides, I know not what strange preju-
dice

Is rooted in his mind; this Band of ours,
Which you've collected for the noblest
ends,

Along the confines of the Esk and Tweed
To guard the Innocent—he calls us
"Outlaws;"

And, for yourself, in plain terms he
asserts

That garb was taken up that indulgence
Might want no cover, and rapacity
Be better fed.

Mar. Ne'er may I own the heart
That cannot feel for one, helpless as he
is.

Osw. Thou know'st me for a Man not
easily moved,
Yet was I grievously provoked to think
Of what I witnessed.

Mar. This day will suffice
To end her wrongs.

Osw. But if the blind Man's tale
Should yet be true?

Mar. Would it were possible!

Did not the Soldier tell thee that him-
self,

And others who survived the wreck,
beheld

The Baron Herbert perish in the waves
Upon the coast of Cyprus?

Osw. Yes, even so,
And I had heard the like before: in
sooth

The tale of this his quondam Barony
Is cunningly devised; and, on the back
Of his forlorn appearance, could not
fail

To make the proud and vain his tribu-
taries,

And stir the pulse of lazy charity.
The seignories of Herbert are in Devon;

We, neighbours of the Esk and Tweed,
'tis much

The Arch-impostor—

Mar. Treat him gently, Oswald;
Though I have never seen his face,

methinks,
There cannot come a day when I shall
cease

To love him. I remember, when a Boy
Of scarcely seven years' growth, beneath
the Elm

That casts its shade over our village
school,

'Twas my delight to sit and hear Idonea
Repeat her Father's terrible adventures,
Till all the band of play-mates wept
together;

And that was the beginning of my love.
And, through all converse of our later
years,

An image of this old Man still was pre-
sent,

When I had been most happy. Pardon
me

If this be idly spoken.

Osw. Sec, they come,
Two Travellers!

Mar. (points). The woman is Idonea.
Osw. And leading Herbert.

Mar. We must let them pass—
This thicket will conceal us.

[They step aside.]

Enter IDONEA, leading HERBERT blind.

Idon. Dear Father, you sigh deeply;
ever since

We left the willow shade by the brook-
side,

Your natural breathing has been trou-
bled.

Her. Nay,
You are too fearful; yet must I confess,

Our march of yesterday had better
suited

A firmer step than mine.

Idon. That dismal Moor—

In spite of all the larks that cheered our path,

I never can forgive it but how steadily
You paced along, when the bewildering
moonlight

Mocked me with many a strange fantastic shape—

I thought the Convent never would appear,

It seemed to move away from us and yet,

That you are thus the fault is mine, for the air

Was soft and warm, no dew lay on the grass,

And midway on the waste ere night had fallen

I spied a Covert walked and roofed with sods—

A miniature, belike some Shepherd boy,

Who might have found a nothing doing hour

Heavier than work, raised it within that hut

We might have made a kindly bed of heath,

And thankfully there rested side by side
Wrapped in our cloaks and, with recruited strength,

Have hailed the morning sun But cheerily Father—

That staff of yours, I could almost have heaved

To fling t away from you you make no use

Of me, or of my strength,—come let me feel

That you do press upon me There—indeed

You are quite exhausted Let us rest awhile

On this green bank [He utters doubtless

Her (after some time) Idonea you are silent,

And I divine the cause
Idon Do not reproach me

I pondered patiently your wish and will
When I gave way to your request, and now,

When I behold the ruins of that face
Those eyeballs dark—dark beyond hope of light,

And think that they were blasted for my sake,

The name of Marmaduke is blown away
Father, I would not change that sacred feeling

For all this world can give
Her Nay, be composed

Few minutes gone a faintness overspread
My frame, and I bethought me of two things

My frame, and I bethought me of two things

I ne'er had heart to separate—my grave,
And thee, my Child!

Idon Believe me, honoured Sire!

'Tis weariness that breeds these gloomy fancies,

And you mistake the cause: you hear the woods

Resound with music, could you see the sun,

And look upon the pleasant face of Nature—

Her I comprehend thee—I should be as cheerful

As if we two were twins, two songsters bred

In the same nest, my spring-time one with thine

My fancies, fancies if they be, are such
As come dear Child! from a far deeper source

Than bodily weariness While here we sit

I feel my strength returning—The request

Of thy kind Patroness, which to receive
We have thus far adventured, will suffice

To save thee from this extreme of penury

But when thy Father must lie down and die,

How wilt thou stand alone? Is he not strong?

Idon Is he not valiant?

Her Am I then so soon forgotten? have my warnings passed so quickly

Out of thy mind? My dear, my only, Child,

Thou wouldst be leaning on a broken reed—

This Marmaduke—
Idon O could you hear his voice

Alas! you do not know him He is one
(I wot not what ill tongue has wronged him with you)

All gentleness and love His face bespeaks

A deep and simple meekness and that soul,

Which with the motion of a virtuous act

Flashes a look of terror upon guilt,
Is, after conflict, quiet as the ocean,

By a miraculous finger, stilled at once.
Her Unhappy Woman!

Idon Nay, it was my duty
Thus much to speak; but think not I forget—

Dear Father! how could I forget, and live—

You and the story of that painful night
When, Antioch blazing to her topmost towers,

You rushed into the murderous flames,
returned

Blind as the grave, but, as you oft have
told me,

Clasping your infant Daughter to your
heart

Her Thy Mother too!—scarce had
I gained the door,

I caught her voice, she threw herself
upon me,

I felt thy infant brother in her arms
She saw my blasted face—a tide of

soldiers
That instant rushed between us, and I
heard

Her last death shriek distinct among a
thousand

Idon Nay, Father, stop not, let me
hear it all

Her Dear Daughter! precious relic
of that time—

For my old age, it doth remain with thee
To make it what thou wilt Thou hast

been told,
That when, on our return from Palestine

I found how my domains had been
usurped,

I took thee in my arms, and we began
Our wanderings together Providence

At length conducted us to Rossland,—
there

Our melancholy story moved a Stranger
To take thee to her home—and for my

self,
Soon after, the good Abbot of St Cuth

bert's
Supplied my helplessness with food and

raiment,
And, as thou know'st, gave me this

humble Cot
Where now we dwell—For many years

I bore
Thy absence, till old age and fresh in

firmities
Exact thy return, and our reunion

I did not think that, during that long
absence,

My Child, forgetful of the name of
Herbert,

Had given her love to a wild Freebooter,
Who here, upon the borders of the

Tweed,
Doth prey alike on two distracted

Countries,
Trarior to both

Idon. Oh, could you hear his voice!
I will not call on Heaven to vouch for me,

But let this kiss speak what is in my
heart

Enter a Peasant

Pea. Good, morrow, Strangers! If
you want a Guide,
Let me have leave to serve you!

W P

Idon My Companion
Hath need of rest, the sight of Hut or

Hostel
Would be most welcome

Pea You white hawthorn gamed,
You will look down into a dell, and there

Will see an ash from which a sign-board
hangs,

The house is hidden by the shade Old
Man,

You seem worn out with travel—shall
I support you?

Her I thank you, but, a resting
place so near,

Twere wrong to trouble you
Pea God speed you both

[Exit Peasant]

Her Idonea, we must part Be not
alarmed—

Tis but for a few days—a thought has
struck me

Idon That I should leave you at
this house and thence

Proceed alone It shall be so, for
strength

Would fulfil you ere our journey's end
be reached

[Idon supported by Idonfa

Re-enter MARYADIKI and OSWALD

Mar This instant will we stop him—
Osw Be not hasty

For sometimes, in despite of my con-
viction

He tempted me to think the Story true
His plain he loves the Maid and what

he said
that soured of aversion to thy name

Appeared the genuine colour of his soul—
Anxiety lest mischief should befall her

After his death
Mar I have been much deceived

Osw But sure he loves the Maiden
and never love

Could find delight to nurse itself so
strangely

Thus to torment her with imaginations /—
death—

There must be truth in this
Mar Truth in his story!

He must have felt it then, known what
it was,

And in such wise to rack her gentle heart
Had been a tenfold cruelty

Osw Strange pleasures
Do we poor mortals cater for ourselves!

To see him thus provoke her tenderness
With tales of weakness and infirmity!

I'd wager on his life for twenty years
Mar We will not waste an hour in

such a cause
Osw Why, this is noble! shake her

off at once

7

Mar. Her virtues are his instruments.

—A Man

Who has so practised on the world's
cold sense,
May well deceive his Child—what!
leave her thus,

A prey to a deceiver?—no—no—no—
'Tis but a word and then—

Osw. Something is here
More than we see, or whence this strong
aversion?

Marmaduke! I suspect unworthy tales
Have reached his ear—you have had
enemies.

Mar. Enemies!—of his own coinage.

Osw. That may be,
But wherefore slight protection such
as you
Have power to yield? perhaps he
looks elsewhere.—

I am perplexed.

Mar. What hast thou heard or seen?

Osw. No—no—the thing stands clear
of mystery;
(As you have said) he coils himself the
slander

With which he taints her ear;—for a
plain reason;
He dreads the presence of a virtuous
man

Like you; he knows your eye would
search his heart,
Your justice stamp upon his evil deeds
The punishment they merit. All is
plain:

It cannot be—

Mar.

What cannot be?

Osw. Yet that a Father
Should in his love admit no rivalry,
And torture thus the heart of his own
Child—

Mar. Nay, you abuse my friendship!

Osw. Heaven forbid!—
There was a circumstance, trifling
indeed—

It struck me at the time—yet I believe
I never should have thought of it again
But for the scene which we by chance
have witnessed.

Mar. What is your meaning?

Osw. Two days gone I saw,
Though at a distance and he was dis-
guised,
Hovering round Herbert's door, a man
whose figure
Resembled much that cold voluptuary,
The villain, Clifford. He hates you, and
he knows

Where he can stab you deepest.

Mar.

Clifford never

Would stoop to skulk about a Cottage
door—

It could not be.

Osw.

And yet I now remember,
That when your praise was warin upon
my tongue,

And the blind Man was told how you had
rescued

A maiden from the ruffian violence
Of this same Clifford, he became im-
patient

And would not hear me.

Mar.

No—it cannot be—

I dare not trust myself with such a
thought—

Yet whence this strange aversion?
You are a man

Not used to rash conjectures—

Osw.

If you deem it

A thing worth further notice, we must
act

With caution, sift the matter artfully.

—*Exit MARMADUKE and OSWALD.*

SCENE, the door of the Hostel.

HERBERT, IDONEA, and Host.

Her. (seated). As I am dear to you,
remember, Child!

This last request.

Idon. You know me, Sir; farewell!

Her. And are you going then?

Come, come, Idonea,

We must not part,—I have measured
many a league

When these old limbs had need of rest,—
and now

I will not play the sluggard.

Idon.

Nay, sit down.

[Turning to Host.

Good Host, such tendance as you would
expect

From your own Children, if yourself
were sick,

Let this old Man find at your hands;
poor Leader, (Looking at the dog.

We soon shall meet again. If thou
neglect

This charge of thine, then ill befall thee!

—Look,

The little fool is loth to stay behind.

Sir Host! by all the love you bear to
courtesy,

Take care of him, and feed the tenant
well.

Host. Fear not, I will obey you;—

but One so young,

And One so fair, it goes against my heart
That you should travel unattended,

Lady!

I have a palfrey and a groom: the lad
Shall squire you (would it not be better,

Sir?)

And for less fee than I would, let him run
For any lady I have seen this twelve-
month.

Idon. You know, Sir, I have been
too long your guard
Not to have learnt to laugh at little
fears.

Why, if a wolf should leap from out a
thicket,

A look of mine would send him scouring
back.

Unless I differ from the thing I am
When you are by my side.

Her. Idonea, wolves
Are not the enemies that move my fears.

Idon. No more, I pray, of this.

Three days at farthest
Will bring me back—protect him,
Saints—farewell!

[Exit IDONEA.]

Host. 'Tis never drought with us—
St. Cuthbert and his Pilgrims.

Thanks to them, are to us a stream of
comfort:

Pity the Maiden did not wait a while;
She could not, Sir, have failed of com-
pany.

Her. Now, she is gone, I fain would
call her back.

Host (calling). Holla!

Her. No, no, the business must be
done.

What means this riotous noise?

Host. The villagers
Are flocking in—a wedding festival—
That's all—God save you, Sir.

Enter OSWALD.

Osw. Ha! as I live,

The Baron Herbert.

Host. Mercy, the Baron Herbert!

Osw. So far into your journey! on
my life,

You are a lusty Traveller. But how
fare you?

Her. Well as the wreck I am permits.
And you, Sir!

Osw. I do not see Idonea.

Her. Dutiful Gir,
She is gone before, to spare my weariness.
But what has brought you hither?

Osw. A slight affair,
That will be soon despatched.

Her. Did Marmaduke
Receive that letter?

Osw. Be at peace.—The tie
Is broken, you will hear no more of him.

Her. This is true comfort, thanks a
thousand times!

That noise!—would I had gone with her
as far

As the Lord Clifford's Castle: I have
heard

That, in his milder moods, he has ex-
pressed

Compassion for me. His influence is
great

With Henry, our good King;—the
Baron might

Have heard my suit, and urged my plea
at Court.

No matter—he's a dangerous Man.—
That noise!

'Tis too disorderly for sleep or rest.
Idonea would have fears for me,—the
Convent

Will give me quiet lodging. You have a
boy, good Host,

And he must lead me back.

Osw. You are most lucky;
I have been waiting in the wood hard by
For a companion—here he comes; our
journey

Enter MARMADUKE.

Lies on your way; accept us as your
Guides.

Her. Alas! I creep so slowly.

Osw. Never fear;

We'll not complain of that.

Her. My limbs are stiff

And need repose. Could you but wait
an hour!

Osw. Most willingly!—Come, let me
lead you in.

And, while you take your rest, think not
of us:

We'll stroll into the wood; lean on my
arm.

[Conducts HERBERT into the house. Exit
MARMADUKE.]

Enter Villagers.

*Osw. (to himself coming out of the
Hostel).* I have prepared a most
apt Instrument—

The Vagrant must, no doubt, be loiter-
ing somewhere

About this ground; she hath a tongue
well skilled,

By mingling natural matter of her own
With all the daring fictions I have
taught her,

To win belief, such as my plot requires.

[Exit OSWALD.]

Enter more Villagers, a Musician among them.

Host (to them). Into the court, my
Friend, and perch yourself

Aloft upon the elm-tree. Pretty Maids,
Garlands and flowers, and cakes and
merry thoughts,

Are here, to send the sun into the west
More speedily than you belike would
wish.

Scene changes to the Wood adjoining the
Hostel—MARMADUKE and OSWALD
entering.

Mar. I would fain hope that we deceive
ourselves :
When first I saw him sitting there,
alone,
It struck upon my heart I know not how.
Osw. To-day will clear up all.—You
marked a Cottage,
That ragged Dwelling, close beneath a
rock
By the brook-side : it is the abode of
One,
A Maiden innocent till ensnared by
Clifford,
Who soon grew weary of her ; but, alas !
What she had seen and suffered turned
her brain.
Cast off by her Betrayer, she dwells
alone,
Nor moves her hands to any needful
work :
She eats her food which every day the
peasants
Bring to her hut ; and so the Wretch has
lived
Ten years ; and no one ever heard her
voice ;
But every night at the first stroke of
twelve
She quits her house, and, in the neigh-
bouring Churchyard
Upon the self-same spot, in rain or
storm,
She paces out the hour 'twixt twelve and
one—
She paces round and round an Infant's
grave,
And in the churchyard sod her feet have
worn
A hollow ring ; they say it is knee-
deep—
Ah ! what is here ?
[A female Beggar rises up, rubbing her eyes
as if in sleep—a Child in her arms.]
Beg. Oh ! Gentlemen, I thank you ;
I've had the saddest dream that ever
troubled
The heart of living creature.—My poor
Babe
Was crying, as I thought, crying for
bread
When I had none to give him ; where-
upon,
I put a slip of foxglove in his hand,
Which pleased him so, that he was
hushed at once :
When, into one of those same spotted
bells
A bee came darting, which the Child
with joy

Imprisoned there, and held it to his ear.
And suddenly grew black, as he would
die.

Mar. We have no time for this, my
babbling Gossip ;
Here's what will comfort you.

Beg. ^[Gt as her money.] The Saints reward you
For this good deed !—Well, Sirs, the
passed away ;

And afterwards I fancied a strange dog
Trotting along the beaten road,
Came to my child as by my side he
slept,

And, fondling, licked his face, then cu-
a sudden
Snapped fierce to make a morsel of his
head :

But here he is [kissing the Child], it must
have been a dream.

Osw. When next inclined to sleep
take my advice,
And put your head, good Woman, under
cover.

Beg. Oh, sir, you would not talk thus,
if you knew

What life is this of ours, how sleep will
master
The weary-worn.—You gentlemen have
got

Warm chambers to your wish. I'd
rather be

A stone than what I am.—But two
nights gone,

The darkness overtook me—wind and
rain

Beat hard upon my head—and yet I saw
A glow-worm, through the covert of the
furze,

Shine calmly as if nothing ailed the
sky

At which I half accused the God in
Heaven—

You must forgive me.

Osw. Ay, and if you think
The Fairies are to blame, and you should
chide

Your favourite saint—no matter—this
good day

Has made amends

Beg. Thanks to you both ; but, O
sir !

How would you like to travel on whole
hours

As I have done, my eyes upon the ground
Expecting still, I knew not how, to
find

A piece of money glittering through
the dust ?

Mar. This woman is a prater. Fra-
good Lady !

Do you tell fortunes ?

Beg. Oh Sir, you are like the rest.

This little one—it cuts me to the heart—
Well if they might turn a beggar from
their doors.

But these are Mothers who can see the
Babe

Here at my breast, and ask me where I
bought it!

This they can do, and look upon my
face—

But you, Sir, should be kinder.

Mar. Come hither, Fathers,
And learn what nature is from this poor
Wretch!

Beg. Ay, Sir, there's nobody that
feels for us.

Why now—but yesterday I overtook
A blind old Greybeard and accosted
him,

I th' name of all the Saints, and by the
Mass

He should have used me better!—
Charity!

If you can melt a rock, he is your man;
But I'll be even with him—here again
Have I been waiting for him.

Osw. Well, but softly,
Who is it that hath wronged you?

Beg. Mark you me;
I'll point him out;—a Maiden is his
guide.

Lovely as Spring's first rose; a little dog,
Tied by a woollen cord, moves on before
With look as sad as he were dumb: the
cur,

I owe him no ill will, but in good sooth
He does his Master credit.

Mar. As I live,
'Tis Herbert and no other!

Beg. 'Tis a feast to see him,
Lank as a ghost and tall, his shoulders
bent,

And long beard white with age—yet ever-
more,

As if he were the only Saint on earth,
He turns his face to heaven.

Osw. But why so violent
Against this venerable Man?

Beg. I'll tell you:
He has the very hardest heart on earth;

I had as lief turn to the Friar's school
And knock for entrance, in mid holiday.

Mar. But in your story.

Beg. I was saying, Sir—
Well!—he has often spurned me like a
toad.

But yesterday was worse than all;—
at last

I overtook him, Sirs, my Babe and I,
And begged a little aid for charity:

But he was snappish as a cottage cur.
Well then, says I,—I'll out with it; at
which

I cast a look upon the Girl, and felt

As if my heart would burst; and so I
left him.

Osw. I think, good Woman, you are
the very person

Whom, but some few days past, I saw
in Eskdale,

At Herbert's door.

Beg. Ay; and if truth were known
I have good business there.

Osw. I met you at the threshold,
And he seemed angry.

Beg. Angry! well he might;
And long as I can stir I'll dog him.—
Yesterday,

To serve me so, and knowing that he
owes

The best of all he has to me and mine.
But 'tis all over now.—That good old
Lady

Has left a power of riches; and I say it,
If there's a lawyer in the land, the
knave

Shall give me half.

Osw. What's this?—I fear, good
Woman,

You have been insolent.

Beg. And there's the Baron,
I spied him skulking in his peasant's
dress.

Osw. How say you? in disguise?—

Mar. But what's your business
With Herbert or his Daughter?

Beg. Daughter! truly—
But how's the day?—I fear, my little
Boy,

We've overslept ourselves.—Sirs, have
you seen him?

Mar. I must have more of this;—
you shall not stir

An inch, till I am answered. Know
you aught

That doth concern this Herbert?

Beg. You are provoked,
And will misuse me, Sir!

Mar. No trifling, Woman!—

Osw. You are as safe as in a sanctuary;
Speak.

Mar. Speak!

Beg. He is a most hard-hearted Man.
Mar. Your life is at my mercy.

Beg. Do not harm me,
And I will tell you all!—You know not,
Sir,

What strong temptations press upon the
Poor.

Osw. Speak out.

Beg. Oh Sir, I've been a wicked
Woman.

Osw. Nay, but speak out!

Beg. He flattered me, and said
What harvest it would bring us both;
and so

I parted with the Child.

Mar. Parted with whom?
Beg. Idonea, as he calls her; but the Girl
 is mine.

Mar. Yours, Woman! are you Herbert's wife?

Beg. Wife, Sir! his wife—not I; my husband, Sir,

Was of Kirkoswald—many a snowy winter
 We've weathered out together. My poor
 Gilfred!

He has been two years in his grave.
Mar. Enough.

Osw. We've solved the riddle—Miscrant!

Mar. Do you,
 Good Dame, repair to Liddesdale and wait

For my return; be sure you shall have justice.

Osw. A lucky woman!—go, you have done good service. [*Aside.*

Mar. [*to herself*]. Eternal praises on the power that saved her!

Osw. [*gives her money*]. Here's for your little boy—and when you christen him
 I'll be his Godfather.

Beg. Oh Sir, you are merry with me. In grange or farm this Hundred scarcely owns

A dog that does not know me.—These good Folks,

For love of God, I must not pass their doors

But I'll be back with my best speed: for you—

God bless and thank you both, my gentle Masters.

[*Exit Beggar.*

Mar. [*to herself*]. The cruel Viper!
 —Poor devoted Maid,

Now I do love thee.

Osw. I am thunderstruck.

Mar. Where is she—holla!

Callin' to the Beggar, who returns; he looks at her steadfastly.

You are Idonea's Mother?—
 Nay, be not terrified—it does me good
 To look upon you.

Osw. [*interrupting*]. In a peasant's dress

You saw, who was it?

Beg. Nay, I dare not speak; He is a man, if it should come to his ears
 I never shall be heard of more.

Osw. Lord Clifford?

Beg. What can I do? believe me, gentle Sir,

I love her, though I dare not call her daughter.

Osw. Lord Clifford—did you see him talk with Herbert?

Beg. Yes, to my sorrow—under the great oak

At Herbert's door—and when he stood beside

The blind man—at the silent Girl he looked

With such a look—it makes me tremble, Sir.

To think of it.

Osw. Enough! you may depart.
Mar. [*to herself*]. Father!—to God

himself we cannot give

A holier name; and, under such a mask,
 To lead a Spirit, spotless as the blessed.

To that abhorred den of brutish vice!—
Oswald, the firm foundation of my life

Is going from under me; these strange discoveries—

Looked at from every point of fear or hope,
 Duty, or love—involve, I feel, my ruin.

ACT II

SCENE, *A Chamber in the Hostel*—OSWALD
 alone, rising from a Table on which
 he had been writing.

Osw. They chose him for their Chief!
 —what covert part

He, in the preference, modest Youth,
 might take,

I neither know nor care. The insult
 bred

More of contempt than hatred; both
 are flown;

That either e'er existed is my shame:
 'Twas a dull spark—a most unnatural

fire
 That died the moment the air breathed

upon it.
 —These fools of feeling are mere birds

of winter
 That haunt some barren island of the

north,
 Where, if a famishing man stretch forth

his hand,
 They think it is to feed them. I have

left him
 To solitary meditation—now

For a few swelling phrases, and a flash
 Of truth, enough to dazzle and to blind.

And 'ne is mine for ever—here he comes.

[*Enter MARGARET.*

Mar. These ten years she has moved
 her lips all day

And never speaks?

Osw. Who is it?

Mar. I have seen her.
Osw. Oh! the poor tenant of that
 ragged homestead.

Her whom the Monster, Clifford, drove
to madness.

Mar. I met a peasant near the spot;
he told me,
These ten years she had sate all day alone
Within those empty walls.

Osw. I too have seen her:
Chancing to pass this way some six
months gone,

At midnight, I betook me to the Church-
yard:

The moon shone clear, the air was still,
so still

The trees were silent as the graves
beneath them.

Long did I watch, and saw her pacing
round

Upon the self-same spot, still round and
round.

Her lips for ever moving.

Mar. At her door
Rooted I stood; for, looking at the
woman,

I thought I saw the skeleton of Idonea.
Osw. But the pretended Father—

Mar. Earthly law
Measures not crimes like his.

Osw. We rank not, happily,
With those who take the spirit of their
rule

From that soft class of devotees who feel
Reverence for life so deeply, that they
spare

The verminous brood, and cherish what
they spare

While feeding on their bodies. Would
that Idonea

Were present, to the end that we might
hear

What she can urge in his defence; she
loves him.

Mar. Yes, loves him; 'tis a truth
that multiplies

His guilt a thousand-fold.

Osw. 'Tis most perplexing:
What must be done?

Mar. We will conduct her hither;
These walls shall witness it—from first
to last

He shall reveal himself.

Osw. Happy are we,
Who live in these disputed tracts, that
own

No law but, what each man makes, for
himself;

Here justice has indeed a field of triumph.

Mar. Let us begone and bring her
hither;—here

The truth shall be laid open, his guilt
proved.

Before her face. The rest be left to me.

Osw. You will be firm; but though
we well may trust

The issue to the justice of the cause,
Caution must not be flung aside; re-
member,

Yours is no common life. Self-stationed
here,

Upon these savage confines, we have
seen you

Stand like an isthmus 'twixt two stormy
seas

That oft have checked their fury at
your bidding.

'Mid the deep holds of Solway's mossy
waste.

Your single virtue has transformed a
Band

Of fierce barbarians into Ministers
Of peace and order. Aged men with
tears

Have blessed their steps, the fatherless
retire

For shelter to their banners. But it is,
As you must needs have deeply felt, it
is

In darkness and in tempest that we
seek

The majesty of Him who rules the world.
Benevolence, that has not heart to use

The wholesome ministry of pain and
evil,

Becomes at last weak and contemptible.
Your generous qualities have won due
praise,

But vigorous Spirits look for something
more

Than Youth's spontaneous products;
and to-day

You will not disappoint them; and
hereafter—

Mar. You are wasting words; hear
me then, once for all:

You are a Man—and therefore, if com-
passion,

Which to our kind is natural as life,
Be known unto you, you will love this
Woman,

Even as I do; but I should loathe the
light,

If I could think one weak or partial
feeling—

Osw. You will forgive me—

Mar. If I ever knew
My heart, could penetrate its inmost core,
'Tis at this moment.—Oswald, I have
loved

To be the friend and father of the
oppressed,

A comforter of sorrow;—there is some-
thing

Which looks like a transition in my soul.
And yet it is not.—Let us lead him
hither.

Osw. Stoop for a moment; 'tis an
act of justice;

And where's the triumph if the delegate
Must fall in the execution of his office?
The deed is done—if you will have it
so—

Here where we stand—that tribe of
vulgar wretches

(You saw them gathering for the festival)
Rush in—the villains seize us—

Mar. Seize!

Osw. Yes, they—
Men who are little given to sift and
weigh—

Would wreak on us the passion of the
moment.

Mar. The cloud will soon disperse—
farewell—but stay,

Thou wilt relate the story.

Osw. Am I neither
To bear a part in this Man's punishment,
Nor be its witness?

Mar. I had many hopes
That were most dear to me, and some
will bear

To be transferred to thee.

Osw. When I'm dishonoured!

Mar. I would preserve thee. How
may this be done?

Osw. By showing that you look beyond
the instant.

A few leagues hence we shall have open
ground,

And nowhere upon earth is place so fit
To look upon the deed. Before we enter

* The barren Moor, hangs from a beetling
rock

The shattered Castle in which Clifford oft
Has held infernal orgies—with the gloom,

And very superstition of the place,
Seasoning his wickedness. The De-

bauchee
Would there perhaps have gathered the
first fruits

Of this mock Father's guilt.

Enter Host, conducting HERBERT.

Host. The Baron Herbert
Attends your pleasure.

Osw. (to Host). We are ready—
(to HERBERT) Sir!

I hope you are refreshed.—I have just
written

A notice for your Daughter, that she may
know

What is become of you.—You'll sit down
and sign it;

'Twill glad her heart to see her father's
signature.

(Gives the letter he had written.)
Her. Thanks for your care.

(Sits down and writes. *Exit Host.*)
Osw. (aside to MARMADUKE). Perhaps
it would be useful

That you too should subscribe your name.

[MARMADUKE overlooks HERBERT—then writes—
examines the letter eagerly.]

Mar. I cannot leave this paper.

(He puts it up, agitated.)
Osw. (aside). Dastard! Come.

[MARMADUKE goes towards HERBERT and
supports him—MARMADUKE tremblingly
beckons OSWALD to take his place.]

Mar. (as he quits HERBERT). There is
a palsy in his limbs—he shakes.

[*Exit OSWALD and HERBERT—MARMADUKE
following.*]

—

SCENE changes to a Wood—a Group
of Pilgrims and IDONEA with them.

First Pil. A grove of darker and more
lofty shade

I never saw.

Sec. Pil. The music of the birds
Drops deadened from a roof so thick
with leaves.

Old Pil. This, news! It made my
heart leap up with joy.

Idon. I scarcely can believe it.

Old Pil. Myself, I heard
The Sheriff read, in open Court, a letter
Which purported it was the royal
pleasure

The Baron Herbert, who, as was sup-
posed,

Had taken refuge in this neighbourhood,
Should be forthwith restored. The

hearing, Lady,
Filled my dim eyes with tears.—When
I returned

From Palestine, and brought with me a
heart,

Though rich in heavenly, poor in earthly,
comfort,

I met your Father, then a wandering
Outcast:

He had a Guide, a Shepherd's boy; but
grieved

He was that One so young should pass
his youth

In such sad service; and he parted with
him.

We joined our tales of wretchedness
together,

And begged our daily bread from door
to door.

I talk familiarly to you, sweet Lady!
For once you loved me.

Idon. You shall back with me
And see your Friend again. The good
old Man

Will be rejoiced to greet you.

Old Pil. It seems but yesterday
That a fierce storm o'ertook us, worn
with travel.

In a deep wood remote from any town.
A cave that opened to the road presented
A friendly shelter, and we entered in.

Idon. And I was with you?

Old Pil. If indeed 'twas you—
But you were then a tottering Little-
one—

We sat us down. The sky grew dark
and darker:

I struck my flint, and built up a small
fire

With rotten boughs and leaves, such as
the winds

Of many autumns in the cave had piled.
Meanwhile the storm fell heavy on the
woods;

Our little fire sent forth a cheering
warmth

And we were comforted, and talked of
comfort;

But 'twas an angry night, and o'er our
heads

The thunder rolled in peals that would
have made

A sleeping man uneasy in his bed.
O Lady, you have need to love your
Father.

His voice—methinks I hear it now, his
voice

When, after a broad flash that filled the
cave,

He said to me, that he had seen his
Child,

A face (no cherub's face more beautiful)
Revealed by lustre brought with it from
Heaven;

And it was you, dear Lady!

Idon. God be praised.
That I have been his comforter till now!

And will be so through every change of
fortune

And every sacrifice his peace requires.—
Let us be gone with speed, that he may
hear

These joyful tidings from no lips but
mine.

[*Exeunt IDONEA and Pilgrims.*]

*SCENE, the Area of a half-ruined Castle—
on one side the entrance to a dungeon—*

*OSWALD and MARMADUKE pacing
backwards and forwards.*

Mar. 'Tis a wild night.

Osw. I'd give my cloak and bonnet
For sight of a warm fire.

Mar. The wind blows keen;
My hands are numb.

Osw. Ha! ha! 'tis nipping cold.
[*Blowing his fingers.*]

I long for news of our brave Comrades;
Lacy

Would drive those Scottish Rovers to
their dens

If once they blew a horn this side the
Tweed.

Mar. I think I see a second range of
Towers.

This castle has another Area—come,
Let us examine it.

Osw. 'Tis a bitter night;
I hope Idonea is well housed. That
horseman,

Who at full speed swept by us where the
wood

Roared in the tempest, was within an ace
Of sending to his grave our precious

Charge:

That would have been a vile mischance.
Mar. It would.

Osw. Justice has been most cruelly
defrauded.

Mar. Most cruelly.

Osw. As up the steep we clomb,
I saw a distant fire in the north-east;

I took it for the blaze of Cheviot Beacon:
With proper speed our quarters may be
gained

To-morrow evening.

[*Looks restlessly towards the mouth of the dungeon.*]

Mar. When, upon the plank,
I had led him 'cross the torrent, his voice
blessed me:

You could not hear, for the foam beat
the rocks

With deafening noise,—the benediction
fell

Back on himself; but changed into a
curse.

Osw. As well indeed it might.

Mar. And this you deem
The fittest place?

Osw. (aside). He is growing pitiful.

Mar. (listening). What an odd moaning
that is!—

Osw. Mighty odd
The wind should pipe a little, while we
stand

Cooling our heels in this way!—I'll
begin

And count the stars.

Mar. (still listening). That dog of his,
you are sure,

Could not come after us—he *must* have
perished;

The torrent would have dashed an oak
to splinters.

You said you did not like his looks—
that he

Would trouble us; if he were here
again.

I swear the sight of him would quail me
more

Than twenty armies.
Osw. How?

Mar. The old blind Man,
When you had told him the mischance,
was troubled
Even to the shedding of some natural
tears

Into the torrent over which he hung,
Listening in vain.

Osw. He has a tender heart !
[*Oswald offers to go down into the dungeon.*

Mar. How now, what mean you ?

Osw. Truly, I was going
To waken our stray Baron. Were there
not

A farm or dwelling-house within five
leagues,

We should deserve to wear a cap and
bells,

Three good round years, for playing the
fool here

In such a night as this.

Mar. Stop, stop.

Osw. Perhaps,
You'd better like we should descend
together,

And lie down by his side—what say you
to it ?

Three of us—we should keep each other
warm :

I'll answer for it that our four-legged
friend

Shall not disturb us ; further I'll not
engage ;

Come, come, for manhood's sake !

Mar. These drowsy shiverings,
This mortal stupor which is creeping
over me,

What do they mean ? were this my
single body

Opposed to armies, not a nerve would
tremble :

Why do I tremble now ?—Is not the
depth

Of this Man's crimes beyond the reach
of thought ?

And yet, in plumbing the abyss for judg-
ment,

Something I strike upon which turns
my mind

Back on herself, I think, again—my
breast

Concentrates all the terrors of the Uni-
verse :

I look at him and tremble like a child.
Osw. Is it possible ?

Mar. One thing you noticed not :
Just as we left the glen a clap of thunder

Burst on the mountains with hell-
rousing force.

This is a time, said he, when guilt may
shudder ;

But there's a Providence for them who
walk

In helplessness, when innocence is with
them.

At this audacious blasphemy, I thought
The spirit of vengeance seemed to ride
the air.

Osw. Why are you not the man you
were that moment ?

[*He draws MARMADUKE to the dungeon.*

Mar. You say he was asleep,—look at
this arm,

And tell me if 'tis fit for such a work.
Oswald, Oswald !

[*Leans upon OSWALD.*
Osw. This is some sudden seizure !

Mar. A most strange faintness,—will
you hunt me out

A draught of water ?

Osw. Nay, to see you thus
Moves me beyond my bearing.—I will try
To gain the torrent's brink.

[*Exit OSWALD.*
Mar. (*after a pause*). It seems an age
Since that Man left me.—No, I am not
lost.

Her. (*at the mouth of the dungeon*).
Give me your hand ; where are you,
Friends ? and tell me

How goes the night.

Mar. 'Tis hard to measure time,
In such a weary night, and such a place.

Her. I do not hear the voice of my
friend Oswald.

Mar. A minute past, he went to fetch
a draught

Of water from the torrent. 'Tis, you'll
say,

A cheerless beverage.

Her. How good it was in you
To stay behind !—Hearing at first no
answer,

I was alarmed.

Mar. No wonder ; this is a place
That well may put some fears into your
heart.

Her. Why so ? a roofless rock had been
a comfort.

Storm-beaten and bewildered as we were ;
And in a night like this, to lend your
cloaks

To make a bed for me !—My Girl will
weep

When she is told of it.

Mar. This Daughter of yours
Is very dear to you.

Her. Oh ! but you are young ;
Over your head twice twenty years must
roll,

With all their natural weight of sorrow
and pain,

Ere can be known to you how much a
Father

May love his Child.

Mar. Thank you, old Man, for this !
[*Aside.*

Her. Fallen am I, and worn out, a
 useless Man;
 Kindly have you protected me to-night,
 And no return have I to make but
 • prayers;
 May you in age be blest with such a
 daughter!—
 When from the Holy Land I had re-
 • turned
 Sightless, and from my heritage was
 driven,
 A wretched Outcast—but this strain of
 thought
 Would lead me to talk fondly.

Mar. Do not fear;
 Your words are precious to my ears:
 go on.

Her. You will forgive me, but my
 heart ~~was~~ over.
 When my old Leader slipped into the
 flood
 And perished, what a piercing outcry
 • you
 Sent after him. I have loved you ever
 since.

You start—where are we?

Mar. • Oh, there is no danger;
 The cold blast struck me.

Her. 'Twas a foolish question.

Mar. But when you were an Outcast?
 —Heaven is just;

Your piety would not miss its due
 reward;

The little Orphan then would be your
 succour,
 And do good service, though she knew
 it not.

Her. I turned me from the dwellings
 of my Fathers,
 Where none but those who trampled on
 my rights

Seemed to remember me. To the wide
 world

I bore her, in my arms; her looks won
 pity;

She was my Raven in the wilderness,
 And brought me food. Have I not
 cause to love her?

Mar. Yes.

Her. • More than ever Parent loved a
 Child?

Mar. Yes, yes.

Her. I will not murmur, merciful God!
 I will not murmur; blasted as I have been,
 Thou hast left me ears to hear my
 Daughter's voice,

And arms to fold her to my heart.
 Submissively

Thou shalt adore, and find my rest in faith.

Enter OSWALD.

Osw. Herbert!—confusion! (*aside*).
 Here it is, my Friend.

[Presents the Horn.]

A charming beverage for you to carouse,
 This bitter night.

Her. Ha! Oswald! ten bright
 crosses

I would have given, not many minutes
 gone.

To have heard your voice.

Osw. Your couch, I fear, good Baron,
 Has been but comfortless; and yet that
 place.

When the tempestuous wind first drove
 us hither,

Felt warm as a wren's nest. You'd
 better turn

And under covert rest till break of day,
 Or till the storm abate.

(*To MARMADUKE aside*). He has re-
 stored you.

No doubt you have been nobly enter-
 tained?

But soft!—how came he forth? The
 Night-mare Conscience.

Has driven him out of harbour?

Mar. I believe
 You have guessed right.

Her. The trees renew their murmur:
 Come, let us house together.

[OSWALD conducts him to the dungeon.]

Osw. (*returns*). Had I not
 Estimated you worthy to conduct the
 affair

To its most fit conclusion, do you think
 I would so long have struggled with my
 Nature.

And smothered all that's man in me!—
 away!—

[Looking towards the dungeon.]

This man's the property of him who best
 Can feel his crimes. I have resigned a
 privilege;

It now becomes my duty to resume it.

Mar. Touch not a finger—

Osw. What then must be done?

Mar. Which way so'er I turn, I am
 perplexed.

Osw. Now, on my life, I grieve for you.

The misery

Of doubt is insupportable. Pity, the

facts

Did not admit of stronger evidence;

Twelve honest men, plain men,

would set us right;

Their verdict would abolish these weak

scruples.

Mar. Weak! I am weak—there does
 my torment lie,

Feeding itself.

Osw. Verily, when he said

How his old heart would leap to hear

her steps.

You thought his voice the echo of

Idonea's.

Mar And never heard a sound so terrible
 Osw Perchance you think so now?
 Mar I cannot do it
 Twice did I spring to grasp his withered throat,
 When such a sudden weakness fell upon me,
 I could have dropped asleep upon his breast

Osw Justice—is there not thunder in the word?
 Shall it be law to stab the petty robber
 Who aims but at our purse and shall this Parricide—
 Worse is he far, far worse (if foul dishonour
 Be worse than death) to that cunning Creature
 Whom he to more than filial love and duty

Hath falsely trained—shall he fulfil his purpose?
 But you are fallen
 Mar Fallen should I be indeed
 Murder—perhaps asleep, blind, old alone,
 Betrayed in darkness! Here to strike the blow—
 Away! away!—

[Flings away his sword]
 Osw Nay, I have done with you
 We'll lead him to the Convent He shall live,
 And she shall love him With un questioned title
 He shall be seated in his Barony
 And we too chant the praise of his good deeds.

I now perceive we do mistake our masters,
 And most despise the men who best can teach us
 Henceforth it shall be said that bad men only
 Are brave. Clifford is brave, and that old Man
 Is brave

[Taking MARMADUKE'S sword and giving it to him]
 To Clifford's arms he would have led His Victim—haply to this desolate house
 Mar (advancing to the dungeon) It must be ended!—

Osw Softly, do not rouse him.
 He will deny it to the last. He lies
 Within the Vault, a spear's length to the left.

[MARMADUKE descends to the dungeon (Alone)]
 The Villains rose in mutiny to destroy me
 I could have quelled the Cowards, but this Stripling

Must needs step in, and save my life.

The look
 With which he gave the boon—I see it now!

The same that tempted me to loathe the gift—

For this old venerable Gray-beard—faith 'Tis his own fault if he hath got a face
 Which doth play tricks with them that look on it.

Twas this that put it in my thoughts—that countenance—

His staff—his figure—Murder!—what, of whom?

We kill a worn out horse, and who but women

Sigh at the deed? Hew down a withered tree.

And now look grave but detards He may live

To thank me for this service Rainbow arches

Highways of dreaming passion, have too long

Young as he is, diverted wish and hope From the unpretending ground we mortals tread—

I then shatter the delusion, break it up and set him free. What follows?

I have learned
 That things will work to ends the slaves of the world

Do never dream of I have been what he—

This Boy—when he comes forth with bloody hands—

Might envy, and am now,—but he shall know

What I am now—

[Goes and listens at the dungeon. Praying or parleying?—tut!

Is he not eyeless? He has been half-dead

These fifteen years—

Enter female Beggar with two or three of her Companions

(Turning abruptly) Ha! speak—what thing art thou?

(Recognises her) Heavens! my good Friend!

[To her.]

Beg Forgive me, gracious Sir!—

Osw (to her companions). Begone, ye Slaves, or I will raise a whirlwind

And send ye dancing to the clouds, like leaves

[They retire aghast.]

Beg Indeed we meant no harm; we lodge sometimes

In this deserted Castle—I repent me.

[OSWALD goes to the dungeon—listens—returns to the Beggar]

Osw. Woman, thou hast a helpless
Infant—keep
Thy secret for its sake, or verily
That wretched life of thine shall be the
• forfeit.

Beg. I do repent me, Sir; I fear the
• curse
Of that blind Man. 'Twas not your
• money, sir—

Osw. Begone!

Beg. (going). There is some wicked
deed in hand: [Aside.
Would I could find the old Man and his
Daughter.

[Exit Beggar.

MARMADUKE re-enters from the dungeon.

Osw. It is all over then;—your foolish
fears
Are hushed to sleep, by your own act
and deed,
Made quiet as he is.

Mar. Why came you down?
And when I felt your hand upon my arm
And spake to you, why did you give
no answer?
Feared you to wake him? he must
have been.

In a deep sleep, I whispered to him
thrice.
There are the strangest echoes in that
place!

Osw. Tut! let them gabble till the day
of doom.

Mar. Scarcely, by groping, had I
reached the Spot,
When round my wrist I felt a cord
drawn tight.
As if the blind Man's dog were pulling
at it.

Osw. But after that?

Mar. The features of Idonea
Lurked in his face—

Osw. Psha! Never to these eyes
Will retribution show itself again
With aspect so inviting. Why forbid
me

to share your triumph?

Mar. Yes, her very look,
Smiling in sleep—

Osw. A pretty feat of Fancy!

Mar. Though but a glimpse, it sent
me to my prayers.

Osw. Is he alive?

Mar. What mean you? who alive?

Osw. Herbert! since you will have it,
Baron Herbert!

He who will gain his Seignory when
Idonea

hath become Clifford's harlot—is he
living?

Mar. The old Man in that dungeon is
alive.

Osw. Henceforth, then, will I never in
camp or field

Obey you more. Your weakness, to
the Band,
Shall be proclaimed: brave Men, they
all shall hear it.

You a protector of humanity!
Avenger you of outraged innocence!

Mar. 'Twas dark—dark as the
grave; yet did I see,

Saw him—his face turned toward me;
and I tell thee

Idonea's filial countenance was there
To baffle me—it put me to my prayers.
Upwards I cast my eyes, and, through a
crevice,

Beheld a star twinkling above my head,
And, by the living God, I could not do
it.

[Sinks exhausted.

Osw. (to himself). Now may I perish
if this turn do more

Than make me change my course.
(To MARMADUKE.) Dear Marmaduke,

My words were rashly spoken; I recall
them.

I feel my error: shedding human blood
Is a most serious thing.

Mar. Not I alone,
Thou too art deep in guilt.

Osw. We have indeed
Been most presumptuous. There is
guilt in this,

Else could so strong a mind have ever
known

These trepidations? Plain it is that
Heaven

Has marked out this foul Wretch as one
whose crimes

Must never come before a mortal judg-
ment-seat,

Or be chastised by mortal instruments.

Mar. A thought that's worth a thou-
sand worlds!

[Goes towards the dungeon.

Osw. I grieve
That, in my zeal, I have caused you so
much pain.

Mar. Think not of that! 'tis over—
we are safe.

Osw. (as if to himself, yet speaking
aloud). The truth is hideous, but
how stifled it?

[Turning to MARMADUKE,

Give me your sword—nay, here are
stones and fragments,

The least of which would beat out a
man's brains;

Or you might drive your head against
that wall.

No! this is not the place to hear the tale.

It should be told you pined in your bed,

Or on some vast and solitary plain
Blown to you from a trumpet

Mar Why talk thus?
Whatever the monster brooding in your breast
I care not fear I have none, and cannot fear—

[The sound of a horn is heard
That horn again—Tis some one of our Troop,
What do they here? Listen!

Osw What! dogged like thieves!
I enter WALLACE and LACY

Lacy You are found at last thanks
to the vagrant Troop
For not misleading us

Osw (looking at WALLACE) That
subtle Grey beard
I'd rather see my father's ghost

Lacy (to MARMADKE) My Captain
We come by order of the Band Belike
You have not heard that Henry has at last

Dissolved the Barons' League, and
sent abroad

His Sheriffs with fit force to reinstate
The genuine owners of such Lands and Baronies

As, in these long commotions have been seized

His Power is this way tending It befits
To stand upon our guard and with our swords

Defend the innocent

Mar *Lacy*! we look
But at the surfaces of things, we hear
Of towns in flames, fields ravaged,
young and old

Driven out in troops to want and nakedness,

Then grasp our swords and rush upon a cure

That flatters us, because it asks no thought

The deeper malady is better hid,
The world is poisoned at the heart

Lacy What mean you?

Wal. (whose eye has been fixed suspiciously upon OSWALD) Ay, what is it you mean?

Mar. Harkee, my Friends,—

[Appearing gay
Were there a Man who, being weak and

helpless
And most forlorn, should bribe a Mother,

pressed

By century, to yield him up her Daughter,
A little Infant, and instruct the Babe,

Smiling upon his knee, to call him
Father—

Lacy Why, if his heart be tender,
that offence

I could forgive him

Mar (going on). And should he
make the Child

An instrument of falsehood, should she
teach her

To stretch her arms, and dim the glad-
some light

Of infant playfulness with piteous looks
Of misery that was not—

Lacy Troth, 'tis hard—
But in a world like ours—

Mar (changing his tone) This self-
same Man—

Even while he printed kisses on the
cheek

Of this poor Babe, and taught its inno-
cent tongue

To hush the name of Father—could he
look

To the unnatural harvest of that time
When he should give her up, a Woman

grown,
To him who bid the highest in the

market
Of foul pollutions—

Lacy The whole visible world
Contains not such a Monster!

Mar For this purpose
Should he resolve to taint her Soul by

means
Which bathe the limbs in sweat to

think of them.

Should he by tales which would draw
tears from iron,

Work on her nature, and so turn com-
passion

And gratitude to ministers of vice,
And make the spotless spirit of filial love

Prime mover in a plot to damn his
Victim

Both soul and body—

Wal 'Tis too horrible;
Oswald, what sav you to it?

Lacy Hew him down,
And fling him to the ravens.

Mar But his aspect
Is so meek, his countenance so vener-
able

Wal (with an appearance of mistrust).
But how, what say you, Oswald?

Lacy (at the same moment). Stab
him, were it

Before the Altar.

Mar What, if he were sick,
Tottering upon the very verge of life,

And old, and blind—

Lacy Blind, say you?
Osw (coming forward). Are we Men,

Or own we baby Spirits? Gentle-
courage

Is not an accidental quality.

A thing dependent for its casual birth
On opposition and impediment.

Wisdom, if Justice speak the word, beats
down

The giant's strength; and, at the voice
of Justice,

Spates not the worm. The giant and
the worm—

She weighs them in one scale. The
wiles of woman,

And craft of age, seducing reason, first
Made weakness a protection, and ob-
scured

The moral shapes of things. His tender
cries

And helpless innocence—do they pro-
tect

The infant lamb? and shall the infirm-
ities,

Which have enabled this enormous
Culprit

To perpetrate his crimes, serve as a
Sanctuary

To cover him from Punishment? Shame!
—Justice,

Admitting no resistance, bends ~~at~~
The feeble and the strong. She needs
not here

Her bonds and chains, which make the
mighty feeble.

—We recognise in this old Man a victim
Prepared already for the sacrifice.

Lacy. By heaven, his words are reason!

Osw. Yes, my Friends,
His countenance is meek and venerable;

And, by the Mass, to see him at his
prayers!

I am of flesh and blood, and may I perish
When my heart does not ache to think of
it!

Poor Victim! not a virtue under
heaven

But what was made an engine to en-
snare thee;

But yet I trust, Idonea, thou art safe.

Lacy. Idonea!

Wal. How! what? your Idonea?
[To MARMADUKE.]

Mar. Mine;
But now no longer mine. You know

Lord Clifford;

He is the Man to whom the Maiden—
pure

As beautiful, and gentle and benign,
And in her ample heart loving even me—
Was to be yielded up.

Lacy. Now, by the head
Of my own child, this Man must die;

my hand,
A worthier wanting, shall itself entwine
In his grey hairs!

Mar. (to Lacy). I love the Father in
thee.

You know me, Friends; I have a heart
to feel,

And I have felt, more than perhaps be-
comes me

Or duty sanctions.

Lacy. We will have ample justice.
Who are we, Friends? Do we not live
on ground

Where Souls are self-defended, free to
grow

Like mountain oaks rocked by the
stormy wind?

Mark the Almighty Wisdom, which
decreed

This monstrous crime to be laid open—
here,

Where Reason has an eye that she can
use,

And Men alone are Umpires. To the
Camp

He shall be led, and there, the Country
round

All gathered to the spot, in open day
Shall Nature be avenged.

Osw. 'Tis nobly thought;
His death will be a monument for ages.

Mar. (to Lacy). I thank you for that
hint. He shall be brought

Before the Camp, and would that best
and wisest

Of every country might be present.
There,

His crime shall be proclaimed; and for
the rest

It shall be done as Wisdom shall decide:
Meanwhile, do you two hasten back and
see

That all is well prepared.

Wal. We will obey you.
(Aside). But softly! we must look a
little nearer.

Mar. Tell where you found us. At
some future time

I will explain the cause. [Exeunt]

ACT III

SCENE, the door of the Hostel, a group of
Pilgrims as before: IDONEA and the
Host among them.

Host. Lady, you'll find your Father
at the Convent

As I have told you: He left us yesterday
With two Companions; one of them,

as seemed,
His most familiar Friend. (Going.)

There was a letter
Of which I heard them speak, But that
I fancy

Has been forgotten.

Idon. (to Host). Farewell!

Host. Gentle pilgrims,
St. Cuthbert speed you on your holy
errand.

[Exeunt IDONEA and Pilgrims.]

SCENE, a desolate Moor.

OSWALD (alone).

Osw. Carry him to the Camp! Yes,
to the Camp.

Oh, Wisdom! a most wise resolve! and
then,

That half a word should blow it to the
winds!

This last device must end my work.—
Methinks

It were a pleasant pastime to construct
A scale and table of belief—as thus—

Two columns, one for passion, one for
proof;

Each rises as the other falls: and first
Passion a unit and against us—proof—

Nay, we must travel in another path.
Or we're stuck fast for ever;—passion,

then,
Shall be a unit for us; proof—no, pas-
sion!

We'll not insult thy majesty by time,
Person, and place—the where, the when,

the how.
And all particulars that dull brains

require
To constitute the spiritless shape of Fact.

They bow to, calling the idol. Demon-
stration.

A whipping to the Moralists who preach
That misery is a sacred thing: for me,

I know no cheaper engine to degrade a
man,

Nor any half so sure. This Stripling's
mind

Is shaken till the dregs float on the sur-
face;

And, in the storm and anguish of the
heart,

He talks of a transition in his Soul,
And dreams that he is happy. We dis-
sect

The senseless body, and why not the
mind?—

These are strange sights—the mind of
man, upturned.

Is in all natures a strange spectacle:
In some a hideous one—hem! shall I

stop?

No.—Thoughts and feelings will sink
deep, but then

They have no substance. Pass but a
few minutes,

And something shall be done which
Memory

May touch, when'er her Vassals are at
work.

Enter MARMADUKE, from behind.

Osw. (turning to meet him). But
listen, for my peace—

Mar. Why, I believe you.

Osw. But hear the proof!

Mar. Ay, prove that when two peas
lie snugly in a pod, the pod must then

be larger than the peas—prove this—
'twere matter

Worthy the hearing. Fool was I to
dream

It ever could be otherwise!

Osw. Last night
When I returned with water from the

brook,
I overheard the Villains—every word
Like red-hot iron burnt into my heart.

Said one, "It is agreed on. The blind
Man

Shall feign a sudden illness, and the Girl,
Who on her journey must proceed alone,

Under pretence of violence, be seized.
She is," continued the detested Slave.

"She is right willing—strange if she were
not!

They say, Lord Clifford is a savage man;
But, faith, to see him in his silken tunic,

Fitting his low voice to the minstrel's
harp.

There's witchery in't. I never knew a
mad

That could withstand it. True," con-
tinued he,

"When we arranged the affair, she wept
a little

(Not the less welcome to my Lord for
that)

And said, 'My Father he will have it so.'
Mar. I am your hearer.

Osw. This I caught, and more
That may not be retold to any ear.

The obstinate bolt of a small iron door
Detained them near the gateway of the

Castle.
By a dim lantern's light I saw that

wreaths
Of flowers were in their hands, as if

designed
For festive decoration; and they said,
With brutal laughter and most foul

allusion,
That they should share the Banquet

with their Lord.
And his new Favourite.

Mar. Misery!—
Osw. I knew

How you would be disturbed by this dire
news,

And therefore chose this solitary Moor,
Here to impart the tale, of which, last

night,
I strove to ease my mind, when our two

Comrades, [upon us]
Commissioned by the Band, burst in

Mar. Last night, when moved to lift
the avenging steel,
I did believe all things were shadows—
yes.

Living or dead all things were bodiless,
Or but the mutual mockeries of body,
Till that same star summoned me back
again.

Now I could laugh till my ribs ached.
Oh Fool!

So let a creed, built in the heart of things,
Dissolve before a twinkling atom!—

Oswald,
I could fetch lessons out of wiser schools
Than you have entered, were it worth
the pains.

Young as I am, I might go forth a teacher,
And you should see how deeply I could
reason.

Of love in all its shapes, beginnings, ends;
Of moral qualities in their diverse aspects;
Of actions, and their laws and tendencies.

Osw. You take it as it merits—

Mar. One a King,
General or Charn, Sultan or Emperor,
Strews twenty acres of good meadow-
ground

With carcases, in lineament and shape
And substance, nothing differing from
his own,

But that they cannot stand up of them-
selves;

Another sits i' th' sun, and by the hour
Floats kingcups in the brook—a Hero
one

We call, and scorn the other as Time's
spendthrift;

But have they not a world of common
ground

To occupy—both fools, or wise alike,
Each in his way?

Osw. Troth, I begin to think so.

Mar. Now for the corner-stone of my
philosophy:

would not give a denier for the man
Who, on such provocation as this earth
yields, could not chuck his babe beneath
the chin,

and send it with a fillip to its grave.

Osw. Nay, you leave me behind.

Mar. That such a One,
So pious in demeanour! in his look
So saintly and so pure!—Hark'ee,
my Friend,

I'll plant myself before Lord Clifford's
Castle,

A surly mastiff kennels at the gate,
And he shall howl and I will laugh, a

medley
Most tunable.

Osw. In faith, a pleasant scheme;
But take your sword along with you,

Might in such neighbourhood find seemly
use.—

But first, how wash our hands of this
old Man?

Mar. Oh yes, that mole, that viper in
the path;

Plague on my memory, him I had for-
gotten.

Osw. You know we left him sitting—
see him yonder.

Mar. Ha! ha!—

Osw. As 'twill be but a moment's
work,

I will stroll on; you follow when 'tis
done.

[Exeunt.]

SCENE changes to another part of the
Moor at a short distance—HERBERT
is discovered seated on a stone.

Her. A sound of laughter, too!—'tis
well—I feared,

The Stranger had some pitiable sorrow
Pressing upon his solitary heart.

Hush!—'tis the feeble and earth-loving
wind

That creeps along the bells of the crisp
heather.

Alas! 'tis cold—I shiver in the sunshine—
What can this mean? There is a psalm

that speaks

Of God's parental mercies—with Idonea
I used to sing it.—Listen!—what foot
is there?

Enter MARMADUKE.

Mar. (aside—looking at HERBERT).
And I have loved this Man! and
she hath loved him!

And I loved her, and she loves the Lord
Clifford!

And there it ends;—if this be not enough
To make mankind merry for evermore,

Then plain it is as day, that eyes were
made

For a wise purpose—verily to weep
with!

[Looking round.]

A pretty prospect this, a masterpiece
Of Nature, finished with most curious

skill!

(To HERBERT). Good Baron, have you
ever practised tillage?

Pray tell me what this land is worth by
the acre?

Her. How glad I am to hear your
voice! I know not

Wherein I have offended you;—last
night

I found in you the kindest of Protectors;
This morning, when I spoke of weakness,

You from my shoulder took my scrip
and threw it.

About your own; but for these two
hours past

Once only have you spoken, when the
lark

Whirled from among the fern beneath
our feet,

And I, no coward in my better days,
Was almost terrified.

Mar. That's excellent!—
So, you bethought you of the many ways
in which a man may come to his end,
whose crimes

Have roused all Nature up against him—
pshaw!—

Her. For mercy's sake, is nobody in
sight?

No traveller, peasant, herdsman?

Mar. Not a soul:
Here is a tree, ragged, and bent, and bare,
That turns its goat's-beard flakes of pea-
green moss

From the stern breathing of the rough
sea-wind;

This have we, but no other company:
Commend me to the place. If a man
should die

And leave his body here, it were all one
As he were twenty fathoms underground.

Her. Where is our common Friend?

Mar. A ghost, methinks—
The Spirit of a murdered man, for
instance—

Might have fine room to ramble about
here,

A grand domain to squeak and gibber in.

Her. Lost Man! if thou have any
close-pent guilt

Pressing upon thy heart, and this the
hour

Of visitation—

Mar. A bold word from you!

Her. Restore him, Heaven!

Mar. The desperate Wretch!—A
Flower,

Fairest of all flowers, was she once, but
now

They have snapped her from the stem—
Poh! let her lie

Besotted with mire, and let the house-
less snail

Feed on her leaves. You knew her well
—ay, there,

[knew]
Old Man! you were a very Lyux, you

The worm was in her—

Her. Mercy! Sir, what mean you?

Mar. You have a daughter!

Her. Oh that she were here!—
She hath an eye that sinks into all hearts,

And if I have in aught offended you,
Spare would her gentle voice make peace
between us.

Mar. (aside). I do believe he weeps—
I could weep too—

There is a vein of her voice that runs
through his:

Even such a Man my fancy bodied forth
From the first moment that I loved the

Maid;

And for his sake I loved her more: these
tears—

I did not think that ought was left in me
Of what I have been—yes, I thank thee,
Heaven!

One happy thought has passed across
my mind.

—It may not be—I am cut off from man;
No more shall I be man—no more shall I
Have human feelings!—(To HERBERT)

—Now, for a little more
About your Daughter!

Her. Troops of armed men,
Met in the roads, would bless us; little
children,

Rushing along in the full tide of play,
Stood silent as we passed them! I have
heard

The boisterous carman, in the miry road,
Check his loud whip, and hail us with
mild voice,

And speak with milder voice to his poor
beasts.

Mar. And whither were you going?

Her. Learn, young Man,
To fear the virtuous, and reverence
misery,

Whether too much for patience, or, like
mine,

Softened till it becomes a gift of mercy.

Mar. Now, this is as it should be!

Her. I am weak!—
My Daughter does not know how weak
I am;

And, as thou see'st, under the arch of
heaven

Here do I stand, alone to helplessness,
By the good God, our common Father,
doomed!—

But I had once a spirit and an arm—
Mar. Now, for a word about your
Barony:

I fancy when you left the Holy Land,
And came to—what's your title—eh?
your claims

Were undisputed!

Her. Like a mendicant,
Whom no one comes to meet, I stood
alone;—

I murmured,—but remembering Him
who feeds

The pelican and ostrich of the desert,
From my own threshold I looked up to
Heaven

And did not want glimmerings of quiet
hope.

So, from the court I passed, and down
the brook,

Led by its murmur, to the ancient oak
I came; and when I felt its cooling shade,
I sat me down, and cannot but believe—
Walle in my lap I held my little Babe
And clasped her to my heart, my heart
that ached
More with delight than grief,—I heard
a voice

Such as by Cherith on Elijah called:
It said, "I will be with thee." A little
boy,

A shepherd-lad, ere yet my trance was
gone,

Hailed us as if he had been sent from
heaven,

And said, with tears, that he would be
our guide:

I had a better guide—that innocent
Babe—

Her, who hath saved me, to this hour,
from harm,

From cold, from hunger, penury, and
death;

To whom I owe the best of all the good
I have, or wish for, upon earth—and
more

And higher far than lies within earth's
bounds;

Therefore I bless her: when I think of
Man,

I bless her with sad spirit,—when of God,
I bless her in the fulness of my joy!

Mar. The name of daughter in his
mouth, he prays!

With nerves so steady, that the very flies
Sit unmolested on his staff.—Innocent!—
If he were innocent—then he would
tremble

And be disturbed, as I am. (*Turning
aside*). I have read

In Story, what men now alive have wit-
nessed,

How, when the People's mind was racked
with doubt,

Appeal was made to the great Judge:
the Accused

With naked feet walked over burning
ploughshares.

Here is a Man by Nature's hand prepared
For a like trial, but more merciful.

Why else have I been led to this bleak
Waste?

Bare is it, without house or track, and
destitute

Of obvious shelter, as a shipless sea.
Here will I leave him—here—All-seeing
God!

Such as he is, and sore perplexed as I am,
I will commit him to this final Ordeal!

He heard a voice—a shepherd-lad came
to him

And was his guide: if once, why not
again,

And in this desert? If never—then the
whole

Of what he says, and looks, and does, and
is,

Makes up one damning falsehood. Leave
him here

To cold and hunger!—Pain is of the
heart,

And what are a few throes of bodily
suffering

If they can waken one pang of remorse?
[*Goes up to HERBERT.*]

Old Man! my wrath is as a flame burnt
out,

It cannot be rekindled. Thou art here
Led by my hand to save thee from per-
dition;

Thou wilt have time to breathe and
think—

Her. Oh, Mercy!

Mar. I know the need that all men
have of mercy,

And therefore leave thee to a righteous
judgment.

Her. My Child, my blessed Child!

Mar. No more of that;

Thou wilt have many guides if thou art
innocent;

Yea, from the utmost corners of the
earth,

That Woman will come o'er this Waste
to save thee.

[*He pauses and looks at HERBERT's staff.*]

Ha! what is here? and carved by her
own hand!

[*Reads upon the staff.*]

"I am eyes to the blind, saith the Lord.
He that puts his trust in me shall not
fail!"

Yes, be it so;—repent and be forgiven—
God and that staff are now thy only
guides.

[*He leaves HERBERT on the Moor.*]

SCENE, an eminence, a Beacon on the
summit.

LACY, WALLACE, LENNOX, *etc. etc.*

Several of the Band (*confusedly*). But
patience!

One of the Band. Curses on that
Traitor, Oswald!—

Our Captain made a prey to foul de-
vice!—

Len. (*to Wal.*). His tool, the Wander-
ing Beggar, made last night

A plain confession, such as leaves no
doubt,

Knowing what otherwise we know too
well,

That she revealed the truth. Stand by
me now;

For rather would I have a nest of vipers

Between my breast-plate and my skin,
 than make
 Oswald my special enemy, if you
 Deny me your support.

Lacy. We have been fooled—
 But for the motive?
Wal. Natures such as his
 Spin motives out of their own bowels,
Lacy!

I learn'd this when I was a Confessor,
 I know him well; there needs no other
 motive

Than that most strange incontinence in
 crime
 Which haunts this Oswald. Power is
 life to him

And breath and being; where he cannot
 govern,
 He will destroy.

Lacy. To have been trapped like
 moles!—

Yes, you are right, we need not hunt for
 motives:

There is no crime from which this man
 would shrink;
 He reckes not human law; and I have
 noticed

That often when the name of God is
 uttered,

A sudden blankness overspreads his face.

Len. Yet, reasoner as he is, his pride
 has built

Some uncouth superstition of its own.
Wal. I have seen traces of it.

Len. Once he headed
 A band of Pirates in the Norway seas;
 And when the King of Denmark sum-
 moned him

To the oath of fealty, I well remember;
 'Twas a strange answer that he made,
 he said,

"I hold of spirits, and the Sun in heaven."
Lacy. He is no madman.

Wal. A most subtle doctor
 Were that man, who could draw the line
 that parts

Pride and her daughter, Cruelty, from
 Madness,

That should be scourged, not pitied.
 Restless Minds,

Such Minds as find amid their fellow-men
 No heart that loves them, none that they
 can love.

Will turn perforce and seek for sympathy
 In dim relation to imagined Beings.

One of the Band. What if he mean to
 offer up our Captain

An expiation and a sacrifice
 To those infernal fiends!

Wal. Now, if the event
 Should be as Lennox has foretold, then
 swear, [wounds
 My Friends, his heart shall have as many

As there are daggers here.

Lacy. What need of swearing!
One of the Band. Let us away!

Another. Away!

A third. Hark! how the horns
 Of those Scotch Rovers echo through
 the vale.

Lacy. Stay you behind; and when
 the sun is down,

Light up this beacon.

One of the Band. You shall be obeyed.
 [They go out together.

SCENE, the Wood on the edge of the
 Moor.

MARMADUKE (alone).

Mar. Deep, deep and vast, vast
 beyond human thought,
 Yet calm.—I could believe, that there
 was here

The only quiet heart on earth. In terror,
 Remembered terror, there is peace and
 rest.

Enter OSWALD.

Osw. Ha! my dear Captain.

Mar. A later meeting, Oswald,
 Would have been better timed.

Osw. Alone? I see;
 You have done your duty. I had hopes,

which now,
 I feel that you will justify.

Mar. I had fears,
 From which I have freed myself—but
 'tis my wish

To be alone, and therefore we must part.
Osw. Nay, then—I am mistaken.

There's a weakness
 About you still; you talk of solitude—

I am your friend.

Mar. What need of this assurance
 At any time? and why given now?

Osw. Because
 You are now in truth my Master; you

have taught me
 What there is not another living man

Had strength to teach;—and therefore
 gratitude

Is bold, and would relieve itself by
 praise.

Mar. Wherefore press this on me?
Osw. Because I feel

That you have shown, and by a signal
 instance,

How they who would be just must seek
 the rule

By diving for it into their own bosoms.
 To-day you have thrown off a tyranny

That lives but in the torpid acquiescence
 Of our emasculated souls, the tyranny

Of the world's masters, with the master
 rules.

By which they uphold their craft from
age to age :

You have obeyed the only law that
sense

Submits to recognise ; the immediate
law,

From the clear light of circumstances,
flashed

Upon an independent Intellect.

Henceforth new prospects open on your
path ;

Your faculties should grow with the
demand ;

I still will be your friend, will cleave to
you

Through good and evil, obloquy and
scorn.

Oft as they dare to follow on your steps
Mar. I would be left alone.

Osw. (*exultingly*). I know your mo-
tives !

I am not of the world's presumptuous
judges,

Who damn where they can neither see
nor feel.

With a hard-hearted ignorance your
struggles . . .

I witness'd, and now hail your victory.

Mar. Spare me awhile that greeting
Osw. It may be

That some there are, squeamish, half-
thinking cowards,

Who will turn pale upon you, call you
murderer,

And you will walk in solitude among
them.

A mighty evil for a strong-built mind !—
Join twenty tapers of unequal height.

And light them joined, and you will see
the less

How 'twill burn down the taller ; and
they all

Shall prey upon the tallest Solitude !—
The Eagle lives in Solitude !

Mar. Even so,
The Sparrow so on the house-top, and I,
the weakest of God's creatures, stand

resolved

To abide the issue of my act, alone.

Osw. Now would you ? and for ever ?
—My young Friend.

As time advances either we become
The prey or masters of our own fast
deeds.

Fellowship we *must* have, willing or no ;
And if good Angels fail, slack in their
duty,

Substitutes, turn our faces where we may,
Are still forthcoming ; some which,

though they bear
ill names, can render no ill services,
in recompense for what themselves
required.

So meet extremes in this mysterious
world,

And opposites thus melt into each other.

Mar. Time, since Man first drew
breath, has never moved

With such a weight upon his wings as
now ;

But they will soon be lightened.

Osw. Ay, look up—
Cast round you your mind's eye, and you
will learn

Fortitude is the child of Enterprise :
Great actions move our admiration,

chiefly
Because they carry in themselves an
earnest

That we can suffer greatly.

Mar. Very true.
Osw. Action is transitory—a step, a
blow,

The motion of a muscle—this way or
that—

'Tis done, and in the after-vacancy
We wonder at ourselves like men be-
trayed

Suffering is permanent, obscure and dark,
And shares the nature of infinity.

Mar. Truth and I feel it.

Osw. What ! if you had bid
Eternal farewell to unmingled joy

And the light dancing of the thoughtless
heart .

It is the toy of fools, and little fit
For such a world as this. The wise

abjure
All thoughts whose idle composition
lives

In the entire forgetfulness of pain.

—I see I have disturbed you.

Mar. By no means.
Osw. Compassion —pity !—pride can
do without them :

And what if you should never know them
more !—

He is a puny soul who, feeling pain,
Finds ease because another feels it too.

If e'er I open out this heart of mine
It shall be for a nobler end—to teach

And not to purchase pining sympathy.
—Nay, you are pale.

Mar. It may be so.

Osw. Remorse—
It cannot live with thought ; think on,
think on,

And it will die. What ! in this universe,
Where the least things control the
greatest, where

The faintest breath that breathes can
move a world ;

What ! feel remorse, where, if a cat had
sneezed,

A leaf had fallen, the thing had never
been

Whose very shadow gnaws us to the
vitals.

Mar. Now, whither are you wandering?

That a man,

So used to suit his language to the time,
Should thus so widely differ from him-
self—

It is most strange.

Osw. Murder!—what's in the world!—
I have no cases by me ready made
To fit all deeds. Carry him to the
Camp!—

A shallow project;—you of late have seen
More deeply, taught us that the insti-
tutes

Of Nature, by a cunning usurpation
Banished from human intercourse, exist
Only in our relations to the brutes

That make the fields their dwelling. If
a snake

Crawl from beneath our feet we do not
ask.

A license to destroy him: our good
governors

Hedge in the life of every pest and
plague

That bears the shape of man; and for
what purpose,

But to protect themselves from extir-
pation?—

This flimsy barrier you have overleaped.

Mar. My Office is fulfilled—the Man
is now

Delivered to the Judge of all things.

Osw.

Mar. I have borne my burthen to its
destined end.

Osw. This instant we'll return to our
Companions—

Oh how I long to see their faces again!

*Enter IDONEA, with Pilgrims, who continue their
journey.*

Idon. (after some time). What, Mar-
maduke! now thou art mine for ever,
And Oswald, too! (To MARMADUKE).

On will we to my Father

With the glad tidings which this day
hath brought;

We'll go together, and, such proof
received

Of his own rights restored, his gratitude
To God above will make him feel for ours.

Osw. I interrupt you?

Idon.

Think not so.

Mar.

Idonea,

That I should ever live to see this
moment!

Idon. Forgive me.—Oswald knows it
all—he knows,

Each word of that unhappy letter fell
As a blood drop from my heart.

Osw.

'Twas even so.

Mar. I have much to say, but for
whose ear?—not thine.

Idon. Ill can I bear that, look—
Plead for me, Oswald!

You are my Father's Friend.

(To MARMADUKE.) Alas, you know not,
And never can you know, how much he
loved me.

Twice had he been to me a father, twice
Had given me breath, and was I not to be

His daughter, once his daughter
could I withstand

His pleading face, and feel his clasping
arms,

And hear his prayer that I would not
forsake him

In his old age— [Hides her face.

Mar. Patience—Heaven grant me
patience!—

She weeps, she weeps—my brain shall
burn for hours

Ere I can shed a tear.

Idon.

"I was a woman";
And, balancing the hopes that are the
dearest

To womankind with duty to my Father,
I yielded up those precious hopes, which

On earth could else have wrested from
me:—if erring,

Oh let me be forgiven!

Mar.

I do forgive thee.

Idon.

But take me to your arms—
this breast, alas!

It throbs, and you have a heart that
does not feel it.

Mar. (exultingly). She is innocent;

[He embraces her.

Osw. (aside).

Were I a Moralist,

I should make wondrous revolution
here;

It were a quaint experiment to show
The beauty of truth—[addressing them.

I see I interrupt you;

I shall have business with you, Marmaduke;

Follow me to the Hostel. [Exit OSWALD.

Idon.

Marmaduke,

This is a happy day. My Father soon
Shall sun himself before his native

doors;
The lame, the hungry, will be welcomed

there.
No more shall he complain of wasted

strength,
Of thoughts that fail, and a decaying

heart; [him.

His good works will be balm and life to
Mar. This is most strange!—I know

not what it was,

But there was something which must
plainly said,

That thou wert innocent.

Idon. How innocent !—
Oh heavens ! you've been deceived.

Mar. Thou art a Woman,
To bring perdition on the universe.

Idon. Already I've been punished to
the height

Of my offence. [*Smiling affectionately.*
I see you love me still,

The labours of my hand are still your
joy ;

Bethink you of the hour when on your
shoulder

I hung this belt.

[*Pointing to the belt on which was suspended HERBERT'S scrip.*

Mar. Mercy of Heaven ! [*Sinks.*

Idon. What ails you ! [*Disaffectedly.*

Mar. The scrip that held his food, and
I forgot

To give it back again !

Idon. What mean your words ?

Mar. I know not what I said—all
may be well.

Idon. That smile hath life in it !

Mar. This road is perilous ;

I will attend you to a Hut that stands
Near the wood's edge—rest there to-

night, I pray you :

For me, I have business, as you heard,
with Oswald,

But will return to you by break of
day. [*Exeunt.*

ACT IV

SCENE. A desolate prospect—a ridge of
rocks—a Chapel on the summit of one—

Moon behind the rocks—night stormy—
irregular sound of a bell—HERBERT

enters exhausted.

Her. That Chapel-bell in mercy seemed
to guide me,

But now it mocks my steps ; its fitful
stroke

Can scarcely be the work of human hands.

Hear me, ye Men, upon the cliffs, if
such

There be who pray nightly before the
Altar. [*place !*

Oh that I had but strength to reach the
My child—my child—dark—dark—I

faint—this wind—

These stifling blasts—God help me !

Enter ELDRD.

Eld. Better this bare rock,
Though it were tottering over a man's

head,
Than a tight case of dungeon walls for

shelter
From such rough dealing.

[*A meaning voice is heard.*

Ha ! what sound is that ?

Trees creaking in the wind (but none are
here)

Send forth such noises—and that weary
bell !

Surely some evil Spirit abroad to-
night

Is ringing it—'twould stop a Saint in
prayer,

And that—what is it ? never was sound
so like

A human groan. Ha ! what is here ?
Poor Man—

Murdered ! alas ! speak—speak, I am your
friend :

No answer—hush—lost wretch, he lifts
his hand

And lays it to his heart—(*Kneels to him.*)
I pray you speak !

What has befallen you ?

Her. (feebly). A stranger has done this.
And in the arms of a stranger I must die.

Eld. Nay, think not so : come, let me
raise you up : [*Raises him.*

This is a dismal place—well—that is
well—

I was too fearful—take me for your
guide

And your support—my hut is not far
off.

[*Draws him gently off the stage.*

SCENE. A room in the Hostel—MARMADUKE
and OSWALD.

Mar. But for Idouea !—I have cause
to think

That she is innocent.

Osw. Leave that thought awhile,
As one of those beliefs which in their

hearts

Lovers lock up as pearls, though oft no
better

Than feathers clinging to their points of
passion.

This day's event has laid on me the
duty

Of opening out my story ; you must
hear it.

And without further preface.—In my
youth.

Except for that abatement which is paid
By envy as a tribute to desert.

I was the pleasure of all hearts, the
darling

Of every tongue—as you are now.
You've heard

That I embarked for Syria. On our
voyage

Was hatched among the crew a foul
Conspiracy

Against my honour, in the which our
Captain

Was, I believed, prime Agent. The
wind fell ;

We lay becalmed week after week, until
The water of the vessel was exhausted ;
I felt a double fever in my veins,
Yet rage suppressed itself ;—to a deep
stillness

Did my pride tame my pride ;—for many
days,

On a dead sea under a burning sky,
I brooded o'er my injuries, deserted
By man and nature ;—if a breeze had
blown,

it might have found its way into my
heart,

And I had been—no matter—do you
mark me ?

Mar. Quick—to the point—if any un-
told crime

Doth haunt your memory.

Osw. Patience, hear me further ;—
One day in silence did we drift at noon
By a bare rock, narrow, and white, and
bare ;

No food was there, no drink, no grass,
no shade,

No tree, nor jutting eminence, nor form
Inanimate large as the body of man,

Nor any living thing whose lot of life,
Might stretch beyond the measure of one
moon.

To dig for water on the spot, the Cap-
tain

Landed with a small troop, myself being
one :

There I reproached him with his treach-
ery.

Imperious at all times, his temper rose ;
He struck me ; and that instant had

I killed him,
And put an end to his insolence, but my
Comrades

Rushed in between us : then did I
insist

(All hated him, and I was stung to
madness)

That we should leave him there, alive !—
we did so.

Mar. And he was famished ?

Osw. Naked was the spot ;
Methinks I see it now—how in the sun

Its stony surface glittered like a shield ;
And in that miserable place we left him,

Alone but for a swarm of minute crea-
tures

Not one of which could help him while
alive,

Or mourn him dead.

Mar. A man by men cast off,
Left without burial ! nay, not dead nor
dying,

But standing, walking, stretching forth
his arms.

In all things like ourselves, but in the
agonies

With which he called for mercy ; and—
even so—

He was forsaken ?

Osw. There is a power in sounds :
The cries he uttered might have stopped
the boat

That bore us through the water—

Mar. You returned
Upon that dismal hearing—did you not ?

Osw. Some scoffed at him, with
hellish mockery,

And laughed so loud it seemed that the
smooth sea

Did from some distant region echo us,
Mar. We all are of one blood, our
veins are filled

At the same poisonous fountain !

Osw. 'Twas an island
Only by sufferance of the winds and
waves,

Which with their foam could cover it
at will.

I know not how he perished ; but the
calm,

The same dead calm, continued many
days.

Mar. But his own crime had brought
on him this doom,

His wickedness prepared it ; these ex-
pedients

Are terrible, yet ours is not the fault.

Osw. The man was famished, and
was innocent !

Mar. Impossible !

Osw. The man had never wronged me.

Mar. Banish the thought, crush it,
and be at peace.

His guilt was marked—these things
could never be

Were there not eyes that see, and for
good ends,

Where ours are baffled.

Osw. I had been deceived.

Mar. And from that hour the miser-
able man

No more was heard of ?

Osw. I had been betrayed.

Mar. And he found no deliverance !

Osw. The Crew
Gave me a hearty welcome : they had
laid

The plot to rid themselves, at any cost,
Of a tyrannic Master whom they loathed,

So we pursued our voyage : when we
landed,

The tale was spread abroad ; my power
at once

Shrunk from me ; plans and schemes,
and lofty hopes—

All vanished. I gave way—do you
attend ?

Mar. The Crew deceived you?

Osw. Nay, command yourself.

Mar. It is a dismal night—how the wind howls!

Osw. I hid my head within a Convent, there Lay passive as a dormouse in mid winter. That was no life for me—I was o'er-thrown, But not destroyed.

Mar. The proofs—you ought to have seen The guilt—have touched it—felt it at your heart— As I have done.

Osw. A fresh tide of Crusaders Drove by the place of my retreat: three nights

Did constant meditation dry my blood: Three sleepless nights I passed in sound- ing on,

Through words and things, a dim and perilous way

And, whereso'er I turned me, I beheld A slavery compared to which the dun- geon

And clanking chains are perfect liberty. You understand me—I was comforted: I saw that every possible shape of action

Might lead to good—I saw it and burst forth

Thirsting for some of those exploits that fill

The earth for sure redemption of lost peace.

[Marking MARMADUKE'S countenance.

Nay, you have had the worst. Ferocity Subsidied in a moment, like a wind That drops down dead out of a sky it vexed.

And yet I had within me evermore A salient spring of energy: I mounted From action up to action with a mind That never rested—without meat or drink

Have I lived many days—my sleep was bound

To purposes of reason—not a dream But had a continuity and substance That waking life had never power to give.

Mar. O wretched Human-kind!— Until the mystery

Of all this world is solved, well may we envy

The worm, that, underneath a stone whose weight

Would crush the lion's paw with mortal anguish,

Doth lodge, and feed, and coil, and sleep, in safety.

Fell not the wrath of Heaven upon those traitors?

Osw. Give not to them a thought.

From Palestine

We marched to Syria: oft I left the Camp,

When all that multitude of hearts was still,

And followed on, through woods of gloomy cedar,

Into deep chasms troubled by roaring streams;

Or from the top of Lebanon surveyed The moonlight desert, and the moonlight sea:

In these my lonely wanderings I perceived

What mighty objects do impress their forms

To elevate our intellectual being;

And felt, if aught on earth deserves a curse,

'Tis that worst principle of ill which dooms

A thing so great to perish self-consumed. —So much for my remorse!

Mar. Unhappy Man! When from these forms I turned

to contemplate

The World's opinions and her usages, I seemed a Being who had passed alone

Into a region of futurity, Whose natural element was freedom—

Mar. Stop— I may not, cannot, follow thee.

Osw. You must. I had been nourished by the sickly food

Of popular applause. I now perceived That we are praised, only as men in us

Do recognise some image of themselves, An abject counterpart of what they are,

Or the empty thing that they would wish to be.

I felt that merit has no surer test Than obloquy; that, if we wish to serve

The world in substance, not deceive by show,

We must become obnoxious to its hate, Or fear disguised in simulated scorn.

Mar. I pity, can forgive, you; but, those wretches—

That monstrous perfidy!

Osw. Keep down your wrath. False Shame discarded, spurious Fame despised,

Twin sisters both of Ignorance, I found Life stretched before me smooth as

some broad way

Cleared for a monarch's progress. Priests might spin

Their veil, but not for me—'twas in fit place

Among its kindred cobwebs. I had been, [land, And in that dream had left my native

One of Love's simple bondsmen—the
soft chain
Was off for ever; and the men, from
whom

This liberation came, you would destroy:
Join me in thanks for their blind services.

Mar. 'Tis a strange aching that, when
we would curse
And cannot.—You have betrayed me—
I have done—
I am content—I know that he is guilt-
less—

That both are guiltless, without spot
or stain,
Mutually consecrated. Poor old *Mar*!
And I had hark for this, because thou
lovedst
Her who from very infancy had been
Light to thy path, warmth to thy
blood!—Together

[Turning to OSWALD.]

We propped his steps, he leaned upon us
both.

Osw. Ay, we are coupled by a chain
of adamant:

Let us be fellow-labourers, then, to
enlarge

Man's intellectual empire. We subsist
In slavery; all is slavery: we receive
Laws, but we ask not whence those
laws have come:

We need an inward sting to goad us on.

Mar. Have you betrayed me? Speak
to that.

Osw. The mask,
Which for a season I have stooped
to wear,

Must be cast off.—Know then that
I was urged,

(For other impulse let it pass) was
driven,

To seek for sympathy, because I saw
In you a mirror of my youthful self;
I would have made us equal once again,
But that was a vain hope. You have
struck home.

With a few drops of blood cut short
the business:

Therein for ever you must yield to me.
But what is done will save you from
the blank

Of living without knowledge that you
live:

Now you are suffering—for the future
day,

'Tis his who will command it.—Think
of my story—

Herbert is innocent.

Mar. (in a faint voice, and doubtfully).
You do but echo

My own wild words?

Osw. Young Man, the seed must lie

hid in the earth, or there can be no
harvest:

'Tis Nature's law. What I have done
in darkness

I will avow before the face of day.
Herbert is innocent.

Mar. What fiend could prompt
This action? Innocent!—oh, breaking
heart!—

Alive or dead, I'll find him. [*Exit.*

Osw. Alive—perdition! [*Exit.*

SCENE, *The inside of a poor Cottage.*

ELEANOR and IDONEA seated.

Idon. The storm beats hard—Mercy
for poor or rich,

Whose heads are shelterless in such a
night!

A Voice without. Holla! to bed,
good Folks, within!

Elea. O save us!

Idon. What can this mean?

Elea. Alas, for my poor husband!—
We'll have a counting of our flocks
to-morrow;

The wolf keeps festival these stormy
nights:

Be calm, sweet Lady, they are wassailers

[The voices die away in the distance.]
Returning from their Feast—my heart
beats so—

A noise at midnight does so frighten me.

Idon. Hush! [*Listening.*

Elea. They are gone. On such a
night, my husband.

Dragged from his bed, was cast into
a dungeon,

Where, hid from me, he counted many
years,

A criminal in no one's eyes but theirs—
Not even in theirs—whose brutal
violence

So dealt with him.

Idon. I have a noble Friend,
First among youths of knightly breed-
ing, One

Who lives but to protect the weak or
injured.

There again! [*Listening.*

Elea. 'Tis my husband's foot. Good
Eldred

Has a kind heart; but his imprisonment
Has made him fearful, and he'll never be
The man he was.

Idon. I will retire;—good night!

[She goes within.]

Enter ELDRÉD (hides a bundle).

Eld. Not yet in bed, Eleanor!—
there are stains in that flock which
must be washed out.

Elea. What has befallen you?

Eld. I am belated, and you must know the cause—(speaking low) that is the blood of an unhappy Man.

Elea. Oh! we are undone for ever.

Eld. Heaven forbid that I should lift my hand against any man. Eleanor, I have shed tears to-night, and it comforts me to think of it.

Elea. Where, where is he?

Eld. I have done him no harm, but—it will be forgiven me; it would not have been so once.

Elea. You have not buried anything? You are no richer than when you left me?

Eld. Be at peace; I am innocent.

Elea. Then God be thanked—

(A short pause; she falls upon his neck.)

Eld. To-night I met with an old Man lying stretched upon the ground—a sad spectacle: I raised him up with a hope that we might shelter and restore him.

Elea. (as if ready to run). Where is he? You were not able to bring him all the way with you; let us return. I can help you.

• [ELDRED shakes his head.]

Eld. He did not seem to wish for life: as I was struggling on, by the light of the moon I saw the stains of blood upon my clothes—he waved his hand, as if it were all useless; and I let him sink again to the ground.

Elea. Oh that I had been by your side!

Eld. I tell you his hands and his body were cold—how could I disturb his last moments? he strove to turn from me as if he wished to settle into sleep.

Elea. But, for the stains of blood—

Eld. He must have fallen, I fancy, for his head was cut; but I think his malady was cold and hunger.

Elea. Oh, Eldred, I shall never be able to look up at this roof in storm or fair but I shall tremble.

Eld. Is it not enough that my ill stars have kept me abroad to-night till this hour? I come home, and this is my comfort!

Elea. But did he say nothing which might have set you at ease?

Eld. I thought he grasped my hand while he was muttering something about his Child—his Daughter—(starting as if he heard a noise). What is that?

Elea. Eldred, you are a father.

Eld. God knows what was in my heart, and will not curse my son for my sake.

Elea. But you prayed by him? you waited the hour of his release?

Eld. The night was wasting fast; I have no friend; I am spited by the world—his wound terrified me—if I had brought him along with me, and he had died in my arms!—I am sure I heard something breathing—and this chair!

Elea. Oh, Eldred, you will die alone. You will have nobody to close your eyes—no hand to grasp your dying hand—I shall be in my grave. A curse will attend us all.

Eld. Have you forgot your own troubles when I was in the dungeon?

Elea. And you left him alive?

Eld. Alive!—the damps of death were upon him—he could not have survived an hour.

Elea. In the cold, cold night.

Eld. (in a savage tone). Ay, and his head was bare; I suppose you would have had me lend my bonnet to cover it.—You will never rest till I am brought to a felon's end.

Elea. Is there nothing to be done? cannot we go to the Convent?

Eld. Ay, and say at once that I murdered him!

Elea. Eldred, I know that ours is the only house upon the Waste; let us take heart; this Man may be rich; and could he be saved by our means, his gratitude may reward us.

Eld. 'Tis all in vain.

Elea. But let us make the attempt. This old Man may have a wife, and he may have children—let us return to the spot: we may restore him, and his eyes may yet open upon those that love him.

Eld. He will never open them more; even when he spoke to me, he kept them firmly sealed as if he had been blind.

Idon. (rushing out.) It is, it is my Father—

Eld. We are betrayed (looking at IDONEA).

Elea. His Daughter!—God have mercy! (turning to IDONEA).

Idon. (sinking down). Oh! lift me up and carry me to the place.

You are safe: the whole world shall not harm you.

Elea. This Lady is his Daughter.

Eld. (moved). I'll lead you to the spot.

Idon. (springing up). Alive!—you heard him breathe? quick, quick—

[Exeunt.]

ACT V

SCENE, *A wood on the edge of the Waste.**Enter OSWALD and a Forester.*

For. He leaned upon the bridge that spans the glen,
And down into the bottom cast his eye,
That fastened there, as it would check the current.

Osw. He listened too; did you not say he listened?

For. As if there came such moaning from the flood
As is heard often after stormy nights.

Osw. But did he utter nothing?

For. See him there!

MARMADUKE appearing.

Mar. Buzz, buzz, ye black and winged freebooters;
That is no substance which ye settle on!

For. His senses play him false:
and see, his arms
Outspread, as if to save himself from falling!

Some terrible phantom I believe is now
Passing before him, such as God will not

Permit to visit any but a man
Who has been guilty of some horrid crime.

[MARMADUKE disappears.]

Osw. The game is up!—

For. If it be needful, Sir,
I will assist you to lay hands upon him.

Osw. No, no, my Friend, you may pursue your business—

'Tis a poor wretch of an unsettled mind,
Who has a trick of straying from his keepers;

We must be gentle. Leave him to my care.

[Exit. FORESTER.]

If his own eyes play false with him,
these freaks

Of fancy shall be quickly tamed by mine;

The goal is reached. My Master shall become

A shadow of myself—made by myself.

SCENE, *The edge of the Moor.**MARMADUKE and ELDRÉD enter from opposite sides.*

Mar. (raising his eyes and perceiving ELDRÉD). In any corner of this savage Waste,

Have you, good Peasant, seen a blind old Man?

Eld. I heard—

Mar. You heard him, where? when heard him?

Eld. As you know,

The first hours of last night were rough with storm;

I had been out in search of a stray heifer;

Returning late, I heard a moaning sound;

Then, thinking that my fancy had deceived me,

I hurried on, when straight a second moan,

A human voice distinct, struck on my ear.

So guided, distant a few steps, I found An aged Man, and such as you describe.

Mar. You heard!—he called you to him? Of all men

The best and kindest!—but, where is he? guide me.

That I may see him.

Eld. On a ridge of rocks A lonesome Chapel stands, deserted now:

The bell is left, which no one dares remove;

And, when the stormy wind blows o'er the peak,

It rings, as if a human hand were there To pull the cord: I guess he must

have heard it;

And it had led him towards the precipice To climb up to the spot whence the sound came;

But he had failed through weakness. From his hand

His staff had dropped, and close upon the brink

Of a small pool of water he was laid, As if he had stooped to drink, and so

remained

Without the strength to rise.

Mar. Well, well, he lived And all is safe: what said he?

Eld. But few words: He only spake to me of a dear Daughter,

Who, so he feared, would never see him more;

And of a Stranger to him, One by whom He had been sore misused; but he for-

gave

The wrong and the wrong-doer. You are troubled—

Perhaps you are his son?

Mar. The All-seeing knows, I did not think he had a living Child.— But whither did you carry him?

Eld. He was torn, His head was bruised, and there was blood about him—

Mar. That was no work of mine.

Eld. Nor was it mine,

Mar. But had he strength to walk? I could have borne him

A thousand miles.

Eld. I am in poverty,
And know how busy are the tongues
of men;
My heart was willing, Sir, but I am one
Whose good deeds will not stand by
their own light;
And, though it smote me more than
words can tell,
I left him.

Mar. I believe that there are phan-
toms.
That in the shape of man do cross our
path;
On evil instigation, to make sport
Of our distress—and thou art one of
them;
But things substantial have so pressed
on me—

Eld. My wife and children came into
my mind.
Mar. Oh Monster! Monster! there
are three of us.
And we shall howl together.

[After a pause and in a feeble voice.]
I am deserted
At my worst need, my crimes have in
a net
(Pointing to ELDRÉD) Entangled this
poor man.—Where was it? where?

[Dragging him along.]
Eld. 'Tis needless. spare your vio-
lence. His Daughter—
Mar. Ay, in the word a thousand
scorpions lodge:
This old man had a Daughter.

Eld. To the spot
I hurried back with her.—O save me,
Sir,
From such a journey!—there was a
black tree.
A single tree she thought it was her
Father—

Oh, Sir, I would not see that hour again
For twenty lives. The daylight dawned,
and now—
Nay; hear my tale, 'tis fit that you
should hear it—

As we approached, a solitary crow
Rose from the spot;—the Daughter
clapped her hands,
And then I heard a shriek so terrible

[MARMADUKE shrinks back.]
The startled bird quivered upon the
wing.

Mar. Dead, dead!—
Eld. (after a pause). A dismal mat-
ter Sir, for me.

And seems the like for you; if 'tis your
wish,
I'll lead you to his Daughter; but 'twere
best

That she should be prepared; I'll go
before.

Mar. There will be need of preparation.
[ELDRÉD goes off.]

Elea. (enters). Master!
Your limbs sink under you, shall I
support you?

Mar. (taking her arm). Woman, I've
lent my body to the service
Which now thou tak'st upon thee.
God forbid

That thou shouldst ever meet a like
occasion
With such a purpose in thine heart as
mine was.

Elea. Oh, why have I to do with
things like these?

[Exit.]

SCENE changes to the door of ELDRÉD'S
cottage—IDONEA seated—enter ELDRÉD.

Eld. Your Father, Lady, from a
wilful hand
Has met unkindness; so indeed he
told me,

And you remember such was my report;
From what has just befallen me I have
cause

To fear the very worst.
Idon. My Father is dead;
Why dost thou come to me with words
like these?

Eld. A wicked Man should answer
for his crimes.

Idon. Thou seest me what I am.

Eld. It was most heinous,
And doth call out for vengeance.

Idon. Do not add.
I prithe, to the harm thou'st done
already.

Eld. Hereafter you will thank me
for this service.

Hard by, a Man I met, who, from plain
proofs
Of interfering Heaven, I have no doubt,
Laid hands upon your Father. 'Tis it
were

You should prepare to meet him.

Idon. I have nothing
To do with others' help me to my
Father—

[She turns and sees MARMADUKE leaning on
ELEANOR—throws herself upon his neck, and
after some time—

In joy I met thee, but a few hours past;
And thus we meet again; one human
stay

Is left me still in thee. Nay, shake not
so.

Mar. In such a wilderness—to see no
thing,
No, not the pitying moon!

Idon. And perish so.
Mar. Without a dog to moan for him.

Idon. Think not of it,
 But enter there and see him how he sleeps,
 Tranquil as he had died in his own bed.
Mar. Tranquil—why not?

Idon. Oh, peace!

Mar. He is at peace;
 His body is at rest: there was a plot,
 A hideous plot, against the soul of man:
 It took effect—and yet I baffled it,
 In some degree.

Idon. Between us stood, I thought,
 A cup of consolation, filled from Heaven
 For both our needs; must I, and in thy presence,
 Alone partake of it?—Beloved Marmaduke!

Mar. Give me a reason why the wisest thing
 That the earth owns shall never choose to die,
 But some one must be near to count his groans.
 The wounded deer retires to solitude,
 And dies in solitude: all things but man,
 All die in solitude.

[Moving towards the cottage door.

Mysterious God,
 If she had never lived I had not done it!

Idon. Alas, the thought of such a cruel death
 Has overwhelmed him.—I must follow.

Eld. Lady!
 You will do well; (*she goes*) unjust suspicion may

Cleave to this Stranger: if, upon his entering,
 The dead Man heave a groan, or from his side

Uplift his hand—that would be evidence.

Elea. Shame! Eldred, shame!

Mar. (*both returning*). The dead have but one face (*to himself*).

And such a Man—so meek and unoffending—

Helpless and harmless as a babe: a Man,
 By obvious signal to the world's protection,

Solemnly dedicated—to decoy him!—

Idon. Oh, had you seen him living!—

Mar. I (*so filled* With horror is this world) am unto thee
 The thing most precious, that it now contains:

Therefore through me alone must be revealed

By whom thy Parent was destroyed,
Idonea!

I have the proofs!—

Idon. O miserable Father!
 Thou didst command me to bless all mankind;

Nor to this moment have I ever wished
 Evil to any living thing; but hear me,
 Hear me, ye Heavens!—(*kneeling*)—
 may vengeance haunt the fiend

For this most cruel murder: let him live
 And move in terror of the elements;
 The thunder send him on his knees to prayer

In the open streets, and let him think he sees,

If e'er he entereth the house of God,
 The roof, self-moved, unsettling o'er his head;

And let him, when he would lie down at night,

Point to his wife the blood-drops on his pillow!

Mar. My voice was silent, but my heart hath joined thee.

Idon. (*leaning on MARMADUKE*). Left to the mercy of that Savage Man!
 How could he call upon his Child!—
 O Friend!

[Turns to MARMADUKE.

My faithful true and only Comforter.

Mar. Ay, come to me and weep. (*He kisses her.*) (*To ELDRÉD.*) Yes, Varlet, look,

The devils at such sights do clap their hands.

[ELDRÉD retires alarmed.

Idon. Thy vest is torn, thy check is deadly pale;

Hast thou pursued the monster?

Mar. I have found him.—
 Oh! would that thou hadst perished in the flames!

Idon. Here art thou, then can I be desolate?—

Mar. There was a time, when this protecting hand
 Availed against the mighty; never more

Shall blessings wait upon a deed of mine.

Idon. Wild words for me to heary for me, an orphan,
 Committed to thy guardianship by Heaven:

And if thou hast forgiven me, let me hope,
 In this deep sorrow, trust, that I am thine

For closer care;—here, is no malady.

[Taking his arm.

Mar. There, is a malady,—
 (*Striking his heart, and forehead*) And here, and here,

A mortal malady.—I am accursed.
 All nature curses me, and in my heart

Thy curse is fixed; the truth must be laid bare.

It must, be told, and borne. I am the man—

(Abused, betrayed, but how it matters not)

Presumptuous above all that ever breathed.

Who, casting as I thought a guilty Person Upon Heaven's righteous judgment, did

become An instrument of Fiends. Through me,

through me Thy Father perished.

Idon. Perished—by what mischance? *Mar.* Beloved—if I dared, so would I call thee—

Conflict must cease, and, in thy frozen heart,

The extremes of suffering meet in absolute peace.

[He gives her a letter.

Idon. (reads) "Be not surprised if you hear that some signal judgment has befallen the man who calls himself your father; he is now with me, as his signature will show: abstain from conjecture till you see me."

"HERBERT.

"MARMADUKE."

The writing Oswald's; the signature my Father's:

(Looks steadily at the paper) And here is yours,—or do my eyes deceive me?

You have then seen my Father?

Mar. He has leaned Upon this arm.

Idon. You led him towards the Convent?

Mar. That Convent was Stone-Arthur Castle. Thither

We were his guides. I on that night resolved

That he should wait thy coming till the day

Of resurrection.

Idon. Miserable Woman. Too quickly moved, too easily giving way,

I put denial on thy suit, and hence. With the disastrous issue of last night.

Thy perturbation, and these frantic words.

Be calm, I pray thee!

Mar. Oswald—
Idon. Name him not.

Enter female Beggar.

Beg. And he is dead!—that Moor—how shall I cross it?

By night, by day, never shall I be able To travel half a mile alone.—Good Lady!

Forgive me!—Saints forgive me. Had I thought

It would have come to this!—
Idon. What brings you hither? speak?

Beg. (pointing to MARMADUKE). This innocent Gentleman. Sweet heavens!

I told him

Such tales of your dead Father!—God is my judge.

I thought there was no harm: but that bad Man,

He bribed me with his gold, and looked so fierce.

Mercy! I said I know not what—oh pity me—

I said, sweet Lady, you were not his Daughter—

Pity me, I am haunted;—thrice this day My conscience made me wish to be struck blind;

And then I would have prayed, and had no voice.

Idon. (to MARMADUKE). Was it my Father?—no, no, no, for he

Was meek and patient, feeble, old and blind,

Helpless, and loved me dearer than his life.

—But hear me. For one question, I have a heart

That will sustain me. Did you murder him?

Mar. No, not by stroke of arm. But learn the process:

Proof after proof was pressed upon me; guilt

Made evident, as seemed, by blacker guilt, Whose impious folds enwrapped even

thee; and truth

And innocence, embodied in his looks, His words and tones and gestures, did

but serve

With me to aggravate his crimes, and heaped

Ruin upon the cause for which they pleaded.

Then pity crossed the path of my resolve: Confounded. I looked up to Heaven, and

cast.

Idon. thy blind Father, on the Ordeal Of the bleak Waste—left him—and so he died!—

[*IDONIA sinks senseless; Beggar, ELEANOR, etc., crowd round, and bear her off.*

Why may we speak these things, and do no more;

Why should a thrust of the arm have such a power,

And words that tell these things be heard in vain?

She is not dead. Why!—if I loved this Woman,

I would take care she never woke again :
But she will wake, and she will weep
for me.

And say, no blame was mine—and so,
poor fool,

Will waste her curses on another name.

[He walks about distractedly.]

Enter OSWALD.

Osw. (to himself). Strong to o'erturn
strong also to build up. [To MARMADUKE.]

The starts and sallies of our last encounter

Were natural enough ; but that, I trust,
Is all gone by. You have cast off the
chains

That fettered your nobility of mind—
Delivered heart and head !

Let us to Palestine ;
This is a paltry field for enterprise.

Mar. Ay, what shall we encounter
next ? This issue—

'Twas nothing more than darkness
deepening darkness,

And weakness crowned with the impo-
tence of death !—

Your pupil is, you see, an apt proficient
(ironically).

Start not !—Here is another face hard
by ;

Come, let us take a peep at both together,
And, with a voice at which the dead
will quake,

Resound the praise of your morality—
Of this too much.

[Drawing OSWALD towards the Cottage—stops
short at the door.]

Men are there, millions, Oswald,
Who with bare hands would have plucked
out thy heart

And flung it to the dogs : but I am
raised

Above, or sunk below, all further sense
Of provocation. Leave me, with the
weight

Of that old Man's forgiveness on thy
heart,

Pressing as heavily as it doth on mine.
Coward I have been, know, there lies
not now

Within the compass of a mortal thought,
A deed that I would shrink from :—
but to endure,

That is my destiny. May it be thine :
Thy office, thy ambition, be henceforth
To feed remorse, to welcome every sting
Of penitential anguish, yea with tears.
When seas and continents shall lie be-
tween us—

The wider space the better—we may find
In such a course fit links of sympathy,

An incommunicable rivalryship
Maintained, for peaceful ends beyond
our view.

[Confused voices—several of the band enter—exit,
upon OSWALD and seize him.]

One of them. I would have dogged
him to the jaws of hell—

Osw. Ha ! is it so !—That vagrant
Hag !—this comes

Of having left a thing like her alive !

Several voices. Despatch him ! [Aside.]

Osw. If I pass beneath a rock
And shout, and, with the echo of my
voice,

Bring down a heap of rubbish, and it
crush me,

I die without dishonour. Famished,
starved,

A Fool and Coward blended to my wish !
[Smiles scornfully and exultingly at MARMADUKE.]

Wal. 'Tis done ! [Seizes him.]

Another of the Band. The ruthless
Traitor !

Mar. 'A rare deed !—
With that reprool I do resign a station
Of which I have been proud.

Wil. (approaching MARMADUKE). O
my poor Master !

Mar. Discerning Monitor, my faith-
ful Wilfred,

Why art thou here ?

[Turning to WALLACE.
Wallace upon these Borders.

Many there be whose eyes will not
want cause

To weep that I am gone, Brothers
in arms !

Raise on that dreary Waste a monument
That may record my story : nor let
words—

Few must they be, and delicate in
their touch

As light itself—be there withheld from Her
Whom, through most wicked arts, wa-

made an orphan

By One who would have died a thousand
times,

To shield her from a moment's harm.
To you,

Wallace and Wilfred, I commend the
Lady,

By lowly nature reared, as if to make her
In all things worthier of that noble birth.

Whose long-suspended rights are now
on the eve

Of restoration : with your tenderest care
Watch over her, I pray—sustain her—

Several of the band (eagerly). Captain !
Mar. No more of that ; in silence
hear my doom ;

A hermitage has furnished me relief
To some offenders ; other penitents,

POEMS REFERRING TO THE PERIOD OF CHILDHOOD 64

Less patient in their wretchedness,
have fallen,
Like the old Roman, on their own sword's
point.
They had their choice: a wanderer,
must I go.
The Spectre of that Innocent Man,
my guide.
No human ear shall ever hear me speak;
No human dwelling ever give me food,

Or sleep, or rest: but, over waste and
• wild,
In search of nothing, that this earth can
give,
But expiation, will I wander on—
A Man by pain and thought compelled
to live,
Yet loathing life—till anger is appeased
In Heaven, and Mercy gives me leave
• to die. 1795-6.

POEMS REFERRING TO THE PERIOD OF CHILDHOOD.

I

My heart leaps up when I behold
A rainbow in the sky:
So was it when my life began;
So is it now I am a man;
So be it when I shall grow old,
Or let me die!
The Child is father of the Man;
And I could wish my days to be
Bound each to each by natural piety. 1804.

II

TO A BUTTERFLY

STAY near me—do not take thy flight!
A little longer stay in sight!
Much converse do I find in thee,
Historian of my infancy!
Float near me; do not yet depart!
Dead times revive in thee:
Thou bring'st, gay creature as thou art!
A solemn image to my heart,
My father's family!

Oh! pleasant, pleasant were the days,
The time, when, in our childish plays,
My sister Emmeline and I
Together chased the butterfly!
A very hunter did I rush
Upon the prey!—with leaps and springs
I followed on from brake to bush:
But she, God love her! feared to brush
The dust from off its wings. 1801.

III

THE SPARROW'S NEST

BEHOLD, within the leafy shade,
Those bright blue eggs together laid!
On me the chance-discovered sight
Gleamed like a vision of delight.
I started—seeming to espy
The home and sheltered bed,
The Sparrow's dwelling, which, hard by
My Father's house, in wet or dry
My sister Emmeline and I
Together visited.

W.P.

IV

FORESIGHT

THAT is work of waste and ruin—
Do as Charles and I are doing!
Strawberry-blossoms, one and all,
We must spare them—here are many:
Look at it—the flower is small,
Small and low, though fair as any:
Do not touch it! summers two
I am older, Anne, than you.
Pull the primrose, sister Anne!
Pull as many as you can.
—Here are daisies, take your fill;
Pansies, and the cuckoo-flower:
Of the lofty daffodil
Make your bed, or make your bower;
Fill your lap, and fill your bosom;
Only spare the strawberry-blossom!
Primroses, the Spring may love them—
Summer knows but little of them:
Violets, a barren kind,
Withered on the ground must lie;
Daisies leave no fruit behind.
When the pretty flowerets die;
Pluck them, and another year
As many will be blowing here.

God has given a kindlier power
To the favoured strawberry-flower.
Hither soon as spring is fled
You and Charles and I will walk;
Lurking berries, ripe and red,
Then will hark on every stalk,
Each within its leafy bower;
And for that promise spare the flower!

1802.

F

V

CHARACTERISTICS OF A CHILD
THREE YEARS OLD

Loving she is, and tractable, though wild;
And Innocence hath privilege in her
To dignify arch looks and laughing eyes;
And feats of cunning; and the pretty round
Of trespasses, affected to provoke
Mock-chastisement and partnership in play.
And, as a faggot sparkles on the hearth,
Not less if unattended and alone
Than when both young and old sit gathered round
And take delight in its activity;
Even so this happy Creature of herself
Is all-sufficient; solitude to her
Is blithe society, who fills the air
With gladness and involuntary songs.
Light are her sallies as the tripping fawn's
Forth-startled from the fern where she lay couched;
Unthought-of, unexpected, as the stir
Of the soft breeze ruffling the meadow-flowers,
Or from before it chasing wantonly
The many-coloured images imprinted
Upon the bosom of a placid lake.

1811.

VI

ADDRESS TO A CHILD
DURING A BOISTEROUS WINTER
EVENING

BY MY SISTER

WHAT way does the Wind come? What way does he go?
He rides over the water, and over the snow,
Through wood, and through vale; and, o'er rocky height
Which the goat cannot climb, takes his sounding flight:
He tosses about in every bare tree,
As, if you look up, you plainly may see;
But how he will come, and whither he goes,
There's never a scholar in England knows.
He will suddenly stop in a cunning nook,
And ring a sharp 'larum;—but, if you should look,
There's nothing to see but a cushion of snow
Round as a pillow, and whiter than milk,
And softer than if it were covered with silk.

Sometimes he'll hide in the cave of a rock,
Then whistle as shrill as the buzzard cock;

—Yet seek him,—and what shall you find in the place?

Nothing but silence and empty space;
Save, in a corner, a heap of dry leaves,
That he's left, for a bed, to beggars of thieves!

As soon as 'tis daylight to-morrow, with me

You shall go to the orchard, and then you will see

That he has been there, and made a great rout,

And cracked the branches, and strewn them about,

Heaven grant that he spare but that one upright twig

That looked up at the sky so proud and big

All last summer, as well you know,
Studded with apples, a beautiful show!

Hark! over the roof he makes a pause,
And growls as if he would fix his claws

Right in the slates, and with a huge rattle

Drive them down, like men in a battle:

—But let him range round; he does us no harm,

We build up the fire, we're snug and warm:

Untouched by his breath see the candle shines bright,

And burns with a clear and steady light:

Books have we to read,—but that half-stiffed knell,

Alas! 'tis the sound of the eight o'clock bell.

—Come now we'll to bed! and when we are there

He may work his own will, and what shall we care?

He may knock at the door,—we'll not let him in;

May drive at the windows,—we'll laugh at his din;

Let him seek his own home wherever it be;

Here's a cozy warm house for Edward and me.

1806.

VII

THE MOTHER'S RETURN

BY THE SAME

A MONTH, sweet Little-ones, is past
Since your dear Mother went away,—
And she to-morrow will return;
To-morrow is the happy day.

O blessed tidings! thought of joy!
 The eldest heard with steady glee;
 Silent he stood; then laughed again,—
 And shouted, "Mother, come to me!"
 Louder and louder did he shout,
 With witless hope to bring her near;
 "Nay, patience! patience, little boy!
 • Your tender mother cannot hear."
 I told of hills, and far-off towns,
 And long, long vales to travel through:—
 He listens, puzzled, sofe perplexed,
 But he submits; what can he do?
 No strife disturbs his sister's breast;
 She wars not with the mystery
 Of time and distance, night and day;
 The bonds of our humanity.
 Her joy is like an instinct, nay,
 Of kitten, bird, or summer fly;
 She dances, runs without an aim,
 She chatters in her ecstasy.
 Her brother now takes up the note,
 And echoes back his sister's glee;
 They hug the infant in my arms.
 As if to force his sympathy.
 Then, settling into fond discourse,
 We rested in the garden bower;
 While sweetly shone the evening sun
 In his departing hour.
 We told o'er all that we had done,—
 Our rambles by the swift brook's side
 Far as the willow-skirted pool,
 Where two fair swans together glide.
 We talked of change, of winter gone,
 Of green leaves on the hawthorn spray,
 Of birds that build their nests and sing
 And all "since Mother went away!"
 To her these tales they will repeat,
 To her our new-born tribes will show,
 The goslings green, the ass's colt,
 The lambs that in the meadow go.
 —But, see, the evening star comes forth!
 To bed the children must depart;
 A moment's heaviness they feel,
 A sadness at the heart:
 'Tis gone—and in a merry fit
 They run up stairs in gamesome race;
 I, too, infected by their mood,
 I could have joined the wanton chase.
 Five minutes past—and, O the change!
 Asleep upon their beds they lie; •
 Their busy limbs in perfect rest, •
 And closed the sparkling eye.

1807.

VII

ALICE FELL

• OR, POVERTY

THE post-boy drove with fierce career,
 For threatening clouds the moon had
 drowned;

When, as we hurried on, my ear
 Was smitten with a startling sound.

As if the wind blew many ways,
 I heard the sound,—and more and more;
 It seemed to follow with the chaise,
 And still I heard it as before.

At length I to the boy called out;
 He stopped his horses at the word,
 But neither cry, nor voice, nor shout,
 Nor aught else like it, could be heard.

The boy then smacked his whip, and fast
 The horses scampered through the rain;
 But, hearing soon upon the blast
 The cry, I bade him halt again.

Forthwith alighting on the ground,
 "Whence comes," said I, "this piteous
 moan?"

And there a little Girl I found,
 Sitting behind the chaise, alone.

"My cloak!" no other word she spake,
 But loud and bitterly she wept,
 As if her innocent heart would break;
 And down from off her seat she leapt.

"What ails you, child?"—she sobbed,
 "Look here!"

I saw it in the wheel entangled,
 A weather-beaten rag as e'er
 From any garden scare-crow dangled.

There, twisted between nave and spoke,
 It hung, nor could at once be freed;
 But our joint pains unloosed the cloak,
 A miserable rag indeed!

"And whither are you going, child,
 To-night along these lonesome ways?"
 "To Durham," answered she, half wild—
 "Then come with me into the chaise."

Insensible to all relief
 Sat the poor girl, and forth did send
 Sob after sob, as if her grief
 Could never, never have an end.

"My child, in Durham, do you dwell?"
 She checked herself in her distress,
 And said, "My name is Alice Fell;
 I'm fatherless and motherless.

And I to Durham, Sir, belong,"
 Again, as if the thought would choke
 Her very heart, her grief grew strong;
 And all was for her tattered cloak!

The chaise drove on; our journey's end
 Was nigh; and, sitting by my side,
 As if she had lost her only friend
 She wept, nor would be pacified.

Up to the tavern-door we post;
 Of Alice and her grief I told;
 And I gave money to the host,
 To buy a new cloak for the old.

"And let it be of duffil grey,
As warm a cloak as man can sell!"
Proud creature was she the next day,
The little orphan, Alice Fell!"

1801.

IX
LUCY GRAY
OR, SOLITUDE

Oft I had heard of Lucy Gray:
And, when I crossed the wild,
I chanced to see at break of day
The solitary child.

No mate, no comrade Lucy knew;
She dwelt on a wide moor,
—The sweetest thing that ever grew
Beside a human door!

You yet may spy the fawn at play,
The hare upon the green:
But the sweet face of Lucy Gray
Will never more be seen.

"To-night will be a stormy night—
You to the town must go;
And take a lantern, Child, to light
Your mother through the snow."

"That, Father! will I gladly do:
'Tis scarcely afternoon—
The minster-clock has just struck two,
And yonder is the moon!"

At this the Father raised his hook,
And snapped a faggot-band;
He piled his work;—and Lucy took
The lantern in her hand.

Not blither is the mountain roe:
With many a wanton stroke
Her feet disperse the powdery snow,
That rises up like smoke.

The storm came on before its time:
She wandered up and down;
And many a hill did Lucy climb:
But never reached the town.

The wretched parents all that night
Went shouting far and wide;
But there was neither sound nor sigh
To serve them for a guide.

At day-break on a hill they stood
That overlooked the moor:
And thence they saw the bridge of wood,
A furlong from their door.

They wept—and, turning homeward,
cried,
"In heaven we all shall meet";
—When in the snow the mother spied
The print of Lucy's feet.

Then downwards from the steep hill's
edge
They tracked the footmarks small;

And through the broken hawthorn
hedge,
And by the long stone-wall;

And then an open field they crossed:
The marks were still the same;
They tracked them on, nor ever lost;
And to the bridge they came.

They followed from the snowy bank
Those footmarks, one by one,
Into the middle of the plank:
And further there were none!

—Yet some maintain that to this day
She is a living child;
That you may see sweet Lucy Gray
Upon the lonesome wild.

O'er rough and smooth she trips along,
And never looks behind:
And sings a solitary song
That whistles in the wind.

1799.

X
WE ARE SEVEN

— A simple Child,
That lightly draws its breath,
And feels its life in every limb,
What should it know of death?

I met a little cottage Girl:
She was eight years old, she said;
Her hair was thick with many a curl
That clustered round her head.

She had a rustic, woodland air,
And she was wildly clad:
Her eyes were fair, and very fair;
—Her beauty made me glad.

"Sisters and brothers, little Maid,
How many may you be?"
"How many? Seven in all," she said,
And wondering looked at me.

"And where are they? I pray you tell."
She answered, "Seven are we;
And two of us at Conway dwell,
And two are gone to sea.

Two of us in the church-yard lie,
My sister and my brother;
And, in the church-yard cottage, I
Dwell near them with my mother."

"You say that two at Conway dwell,
And two are gone to sea,
Yet ye are seven!—I pray you tell,
Sweet Maid, how this may be."

Then did the little Maid reply,
"Seven boys and girls are we;
Two of us in the church-yard lie,
Beneath the church-yard tree."

"You run about, my little Maid,
Your limbs they are alive;
If two are in the church-yard laid,
Then ye are only five."

"Their graves are green, they may be
seen,"

The little Maid replied,
"Twelve steps or more from my mother's
door,

And they are side by side.
My stockings there I often knit,
My kerchief there I hem;
And there upon the ground I sit,
And sing a song to them.

And often after sun-set, Sir,
When it is light and fair,
I take my little porringer,
And eat my supper there.

The first that died was sister Jane;
In bed she moaning lay,
Till God released her of her pain;
And then she went away.

So in the church-yard she was laid;
And, when the grass was dry,
Together round her grave we played,
My brother John and I.

And when the ground was white with
snow,

And I could run and slide,
My brother John was forced to go,
And he lies by her side."

"How many are you, then," said I,
"If they two are in heaven?"

Quick was the little Maid's reply,
"O Master! we are seven."

"But they are dead; those two are
dead!

Their spirits are in heaven!"
'Twas throwing words away; for still
The little Maid would have her will,
And said, "Nay, we are seven!"

1796.

XI

THE IDLE SHEPHERD-BOYS

Og, DUNGEON-GHYLL FORCE¹

A PASTORAL

The valley rings with mirth and joy;
Among the hills the echoes play
A never ending song,
To welcome in the May.
The magpie chatters with delight;
The mountain raven's youngling brood
Have left the mother and the nest;

¹ *Ghyll*, in the dialect of Cumberland and Westmoreland, is a short and, for the most part, a steep narrow valley, with a stream running through it. *Force* is the word universally employed in these dialects for waterfall.

And they go rambling east and west
In search of their own food;
Or through the glittering vapours dart
In very wantonness of heart.

Beneath a rock, upon the grass,
Two boys are sitting in the sun;
Their work, if any work they have,
Is out of mind—or done.

On pipes of sycamore they play
The fragments of a Christmas hymn!
Or with that plant which in our dale
We call stag-horn, or fox's tail,
Their rusty hats they trim:
And thus, as happy as the day,
Those Shepherds wear the time away.

Along the river's stony marge
The sand-lark chants a joyous song;
The thrush is busy in the wood,
And carols loud and strong.
A thousand lambs are on the rocks,
All newly born! both earth and sky,
Keep Jubilee, and more than all,
Those boys with their green coronal;
They never hear the cry,
That plaintive cry! which up the hill
Comes from the depth of Dungeon-
Ghyll.

Said Walter, leaping from the ground,
"Down to the stump of yon old yew
We'll for our whistles run a race."

—Away the shepherds flew;
They leapt—they ran—and when they
came

Right opposite to Dungeon-Ghyll,
Seeing that he should lose the prize,
"Stop!" to his comrades Walter cries—
James stopped with no good will:
Said Walter then, exulting; "Here
You'll find a task for half a year.

Cross, if you dare, where I shall cross—
Come on, and tread where I shall tread."
The other took him at his word,
And followed as he led.

It was a spot which you may see
If ever you to Langdale go;
Into a chasm a mighty block
Hath fallen, and made a bridge of rock;
The gulf is deep below;
And, in a basin black and small,
Receives a lofty waterfall.

With staff in hand across the cleft
The challenger pursued his march;
And now, all eyes and feet, hath gained
The middle of the arch.

When list! he hears a piteous moan—
Again!—his heart within him dies—
His pulse is stopped, his breath is lost,
He totters, pallid as a ghost,
And, looking down, espies
A lamb, that in the pool is pent
Within that black and frightful rent.

The lamb had slipped into the stream,
And safe without a bruise or wound
The cataract had borne him down
Into the gulf profound.
His dam had seen him when he fell,
She saw him down the torrent borne,
And, while with all a mother's love
She from the lofty rocks above
Sent forth a cry forlorn,
The lamb, still swimming round and
round,
Made answer to that plaintive sound.

When he had learnt what thing it was,
That sent this rueful cry ; I ween
The Boy recovered heart, and told
The sight which he had seen.
Both gladly now deferred their task ;
Nor was there wanting other aid—
A Poet, one who loves the brooks
Far better than the sages' books,
By chance had thither strayed ;
And there the helpless lamb he found
By those huge rocks encompassed round.

He drew it from the troubled pool,
And brought it forth into the light :
The Shepherds met him with his charge,
An unexpected sight !
Into their arms the lamb they took,
Whose life and limbs the flood had
spared ;
Then up the steep ascent they hied,
And placed him at his mother's side ;
And gently did the Bard
Those idle Shepherd-boys upbraid.
And bade them better mind their trade.
1800.

XII

ANECDOTE FOR FATHERS

"Retine vim istam, falsa enim dicam, si
coges."—EUSEBIUS.

I HAVE a boy of five years old ;
His face is fair and fresh to see ;
His limbs are cast in beauty's mould,
And dearly he loves me.

One morn we strolled on our dry walk,
Our quiet home all full in view,
And held such intermitted talk
As we are wont to do.

My thoughts on former pleasures ran ;
I thought of Kilve's delightful shore,
Our pleasant home when spring began :
A long, long year before.

A day it was when I could bear
Some fond regrets to entertain ;
With so much happiness to spare,
I could not feel a pain.

The green earth echoed to the feet
Of lambs that bounded through the glade,
From shade to sunshine, and as fleet
From sunshine back to shade.

Birds warbled round me—and each trace
Of inward sadness had its charm ;
Kilve, thought I, was a favoured place,
And so is Liswyn farm.

My boy beside me tripped, so slim
And graceful in his rustic dress !
And, as we talked, I questioned him,
In very idleness.

"Now tell me, had you rather be,"
I said, and took him by the arm,
"On Kilve's smooth shore, by the green
sea,
Or here at Liswyn farm ?"

In careless mood he looked at me,
While still I held him by the arm,
And said, "At Kilve, I'd rather be
Than here at Liswyn farm."

"Now, little Edward, say, why so :
My little Edward, tell me why."—
"I cannot tell, I do not know."
"Why, this is strange," said I ;

"For, here are woods, hills smooth and
warm ;
There surely must some reason be
Why you would change sweet Liswyn
farm
For Kilve by the green sea."

At this, my boy hung down his head,
He blushed with shame, nor made reply ;
And three times to the child I said,
"Why, Edward, tell me why ?"

His head he raised—there was in sight,
It caught his eye, he saw it plain—
Upon the house-top, glittering bright,
A broad and gilded vane.

Then did the boy his tongue unlock,
And eased his mind with this reply :
"At Kilve there was no weather-cock ;
And that's the reason why."

O dearest, dearest boy ! my heart
For better lore would seldom yearn,
Could I but teach the hundredth part
Of what from thee I learn.

1796.

XIII

RURAL ARCHITECTURE

THERE'S George Fisher, Charles Fleming,
and Reginald Shore,
Three rosy-cheeked school-boys, the
highest not more
Than the height of a counsellor's bag ;

POEMS REFERRING TO THE PERIOD OF CHILDHOOD 71

To the top of GREAT HOW¹ did it please
them to climb:
And there they built up, without mortar
or lime,
A Man on the peak of the crag.

They built him of stones gathered up as
they lay:

They built him and christened him all in
one day,

An urchin both vigorous and hale;
And so, without scruple they called him
Ralph Jones.

Now Ralph is renowned for the length
of his bones;

The Magog of Legberthwaite dale.

Just half a week after, the wind sallied
forth,

And, in anger or merriment, out of the
north,

Coming on with a terrible pother,
From the peak of the crag blew the
giant away.

And what did these school-boys?—
The very next day

They went and they built up another.

—Some little few see of blind boisterous
works

By Christian disturbers more savage
than Turks,

Spirits busy to do and undo:
At remembrance whereof my blood
sometimes will flag;

Then, light-hearted Boys, to the top-of
the crag;

And I'll build up a giant with you.

1801.

XIV

THE PET-LAMB

A PASTORAL

THE dew was falling fast, the stars
began to blink;

I heard a voice; it said, "Drink,
pretty creature, drink!"

And, looking o'er the hedge, before me
I espied

A snow-white mountain-lamb with a
Maiden at its side.

Nor sheep nor kine were near; the lamb
was all alone,

And by a slender cord was tethered to
a stone;

With one knee on the grass did the
little Maiden kneel,

While to that mountain-lamb she gave
its evening meal.

¹ GREAT HOW is a single and conspicuous hill,
which rises towards the foot of Thirknere, on
the western side of the beautiful dale of Leg-
berthwaite, along the high road between Kes-
wick and Ambleside.

The lamb, while from her hand he thus
his supper took,

Seemed to feast with head and ears; and
his tail with pleasure shook.

"Drink, pretty creature, drink," she said
in such a tone

That I almost received her heart into
my own.

'Twas little Barbara Lewthwaite, a
child of beauty rare!

I watched them with delight, they were
a lovely pair.

Now with her empty can the maiden
turned away:

But ere ten yards were gone her foot-
steps did she stay.

Right towards the lamb she looked;
and from a shady place

I unobserved could see the workings of
her face:

If Nature to her tongue could measured
numbers bring,

Thus, thought I, to her lamb that little
Maid might sing:

"What ails thee, young One? what?
Why pull so at thy cord?

Is it not well with thee? well both for
bed and board?

Thy plot of grass is soft, and green as
grass can be;

Rest, little young One, rest; what is't
that aileth thee?

What is it thou wouldst seek? What
is wanting to thy heart?

Thy limbs are they not strong? And
beautiful thou art:

This grass is tender grass: these flowers
they have no peers;

And that green corn all day is rustling
in thy ears!

If the sun be shining hot, do but stretch
thy woollen chain,

This beech is standing by, its covert
thou canst gain;

For rain and mountain-storms! The
like thou need'st not fear,

The rain and storm are things that
scarcely can come here.

Rest, little young One, rest; thou hast
forgot the day

When my father found thee first in
places far away;

Many flocks were on the hills, but thou
wert owned by none,

And thy mother from thy side for ever-
more was gone.

He took thee in his arms, and in pity
brought thee home:

A blessed day for thee! then whither
wouldst thou roam?

72 POEMS REFERRING TO THE PERIOD OF CHILDHOOD

A faithful nurse thou hast; the dam
that did thee rear
Upon the mountain tops no kinder could
have been.

Thou know'st that twice a day I have
brought thee in this can
Fresh water from the brook, as clear as
ever ran;
And twice in the day, when the ground
is wet with dew,
I bring thee draughts of milk, warm
milk it is and new.

Thy limbs will shortly be twice as stout
as they are now,
Then I'll yoke thee to my cart like a
pony in the plough;
My playmate thou shalt be; and when
the wind is cold
Our hearth shall be thy bed, our house
shall be thy fold.

It will not, will not rest!—Poor crea-
ture, can it be
That 'tis thy mother's heart which is
working so in thee?
Things that I know not of belike to
thee are dear,
And dreams of things which thou canst
neither see nor hear.

Alas, the mountain-tops that look so
green and fair!
I've heard of fearful winds and darkness
that come there;
The little brooks that seem all pastime
and all play,
When they are angry, roar like lions
for their prey.

Here thou need'st not dread the raven
in the sky;
Night and day thou art safe,—our
cottage is hard by.
Why bleat so after me? Why pull
so at thy chain?
Sleep—and at break of day I will come
to thee again!

—As homeward through the lane I
went with lazy feet,

This song to myself did I oftentimes
repeat;

And it seemed, as I retraced the ballad
line by line,

That but half of it was hers, and one
half of it was mine.

Again, and once again, did I repeat
the song;

"Nay," said I, "more than half to the
damsel must belong,

For she looked with such a look, and
she spoke with such a tone,

That I almost received her heart into
my own."

1800.

XV

TO H. C.

SIX YEARS OLD.

O THOU! whose fancies from afar are
brought;
Who of thy words dost make a mock
apparel,

And fittest to unutterable thought
The breeze-like motion and the self-
born carol;

Thou faery voyager! that dost float
In such clear water, that thy boat
May rather seem

To brood on air than on an earthly
stream;

Suspended in a stream as clear as sky,
Where earth and heaven do make one
infatigery;

O blessed vision! happy child!
Thou art so exquisitely wild,

I think of thee with many fears
For what may be thy lot in future years.

I thought of times when Pain might be
thy guest,

Lord of thy house and hospitality;
And Grief, uneasy lover! never rest

But when she sate within the touch of
thee.

O too industrious folly!
O vain and causeless melancholy!

Nature will either end thee quite;
Or, lengthening out thy season of delight,

Preserve for thee, by individual right,
A young lamb's heart among the full-
grown flocks.

What hast thou to do with sorrow,
Or the injuries of to-morrow?

Thou art a dew-drop, which the morn
brings forth,

Ill fitted to sustain unkindly shocks,
Or to be trailed along the soiling earth;

A gem that glitters while it lives,
And no forewarning gives;

But, at the touch of wrong, without a
strife

Slips in a moment out of life.

1802.

XVI

INFLUENCE OF NATURAL OBJECTS

IN CALLING FORTH AND STRENGTHENING
THE IMAGINATION IN BOYHOOD
AND EARLY YOUTH

FROM AN UNPUBLISHED POEM.

[This extract is reprinted from "THE FRIEND,"
WISDOM and Spirit of the universe!

Thou Soul, that art the Eternity of
thought!

And giv'st to forms and images a breath
And everlasting motion! not in vain,
By day, or star-light, thus from my
first dawn

Of childhood didst thou intertwine for
me

The passions that build up our human
soul;

Not with the mean and vulgar works
of Man;

But with high objects, with enduring
things,

With life, and nature; purifying thus
The elements of feeling and of thought,

And sanctifying by such discipline
Both pain and fear,—until we recognise

A grandeur in the beatings of the heart.
Nor was this fellowship vouchsafed

to me
With stinted kindness. In November

days,
When vapours rolling down the valleys
made

A lonely scene more lonesome; among
woods

At noon; and amid the calm of summer
nights,

When, by the margin of the trembling
lake,

Beneath the gloomy hills, homeward I
went

In solitude, such intercourse was mine:
Mine was it in the fields both day and

night,
And by the waters, all the summer long.

And in the frosty season, when the sun
Was set, and, visible for many a mile,

The cottage-windows through the twilight
blazed,

I heeded, not the summons: happy
time

It was indeed for all of us; for me
It was a time of rapture! Clear and

loud
The village-clock tolled six—I wheeled

about,
Proud and exulting like an untired

horse
That cares not for his home.—All shod

with steel
We hissed along the polished ice, in

games
Confederate, imitative of the chase

And woodland pleasures,—the resounding
horn,

The pack loud-chiming, and the hunted
hare,

So through the darkness and the cold
we flew,

And not a voice was idle: with the din
Smitten, the precipices rang aloud;

The leafless trees and every icy crag
Tinkled like iron; while far-distant hills

And the tumult sent an alien sound
Of melancholy, not unnoticed while the
stars,

Eastward, were sparkling clear, and in
the west

The orange sky of evening died away.

Not seldom from the uproar I retired
Into a silent bay, or sportively

Glanced sideways, leaving the tumultuous
throng,

To cut across the reflex of a star;
Image, that, flying still before me,

gleamed
Upon the glassy plain: and oftentimes,

When we had given our bodies to the
wind,

And all the shadowy banks on either
side

Came sweeping through the darkness,
spinning still

The rapid line of motion, then at once
Have I, reclining back upon my heels,

Stopped short: yet still the solitary
cliffs

Wheeled by me—even as if the earth
had rolled

With visible motion her diurnal round!
Behind me did they stretch in solemn

train,
Feebler and feebler, and I stood and

watched
Till all was tranquil as a summer sea.

1799.

XVII

THE LONGEST DAY

ADDRESSED TO MY DAUGHTER

LET us quit the leafy arbour,
And the torrent murmuring by;

For the sun is in his harbour,
Weary of the open sky.

Evening now unbinds the fetters
Fashioned by the glowing light;

All that breathe are thankful debtors
To the harbinger of night.

Yet by some grave thoughts attended
Eve renews her calm career;

For the day that now is ended,
Is the longest of the year.

Dora! sport, as now thou sportest,
On this platform, light and free;

Take thy bliss, while longest, shortest,
Are indifferent to thee!

Who would check the happy feeling
That inspires the linnet's song?

Who would stop the swallow, wheeling
On her pinions swift and strong?

Yet at this impressive season,
Words which tenderness can speak

From the truths of homely reason,
Might exalt the loveliest cheek;

And, while shades to shades succeeding
Steal the landscape from the sight,
I would urge this moral pleading,
Last forerunner of "Good night!"

SUMMER ebbs;—each day that follows
Is a reflux from on high,
Tending to the darksome hollows
Where the frosts of winter lie.

He who governs the creation,
In his providence, assigned
Such a gradual declination
To the life of human kind.

Yet we mark it not;—fruits redden,
Fresh flowers blow, as flowers have
blown,

And the heart is loth to deaden
Hopes that she so long hath known

Be thou wiser, youthful Maiden!
And when thy decline shall come,
Let not flowers, or boughs fruit-laden,
Hide the knowledge of thy doom.

Now, even now, ere wrapped in slumber,
Fix thine eyes upon the sea
That absorbs time, space, and number;
Look thou to Eternity!

Follow thou the flowing river
On whose breast are thither borne
All deceived, and each deceiver,
Through the gates of night and morn;

Through the year's successive portals;
Through the bounds which many a star
Marks, not mindless of frail mortals,
When his light returns from far.

Thus when thou with Time hast travelled
Toward the mighty gulf of things,
And the mazy stream unravell'd
With thy best imaginings;

Think, if thou on beauty leanest,
Think how pitiful that stay,
Did not virtue give the meanest
Charms superior to decay.

Duty, like a strict preceptor,
Sometimes frowns, or seems to frown;
Choose her thistle for thy sceptre,
While youth's roses are thy crown.

Grasp it,—if thou shrink and tremble,
Fairest damsel of the green,
Thou wilt lack the only symbol
That proclaims a genuine queen;

And ensure those palms of honour
Which selected spirits wear,
Bending low before the Donor,
Lord of heaven's unchanging year!

1817.

XVIII THE NORMAN BOY

HIGH on a broad unfertile tract of
forest-skirted Down,
Nor kept by Nature for herself, nor made
by man his own,
From home and company remote and
every playful joy,
Served, tending a few sheep and goats,
a ragged Norman Boy.

Him never saw I, nor the spot, but
from an English Dame,
Stranger to me and yet my friend, a
simple notice came,
With suit that I would speak in verse of
that sequestered child
Whom, one bleak winter's day, she met
upon the dreary Wild.

His flock, along the woodland's edge with
relics sprinkled o'er
Of last night's snow, beneath a sky
threatening the fall of more,
Where tufts of herbage tempted each,
were busy at their feed,
And the poor Boy was busier still, with
work of anxious heed.

There was he, where of branches rent
and withered and decayed,
For covert from the keen north wind, his
hands a hut had made.
A tiny tenement, forsooth, and frail, as
needs must be
A thing of such materials framed, by a
builder such as he.

The hut stood finished by his pains,
nor seemingly lacked aught
That skill or means of his could add,
but the architect had wrought
Some limber twigs into a Cross, well-
shaped with fingers nice,
To be engrafted on the top of his small
edifice.

That Cross he now was fastening there,
as the surest power and best
For supplying all deficiencies, all wants of
the rude nest
In which, from burning heat, or tem-
pest driving far and wide,
The innocent Boy, else shelterless, his
lonely head must hide.

That Cross belike he also raised as a
standard for the true
And faithful service of his heart in the
worst that might ensue
Of hardship and distressful fear, amid
the houseless waste
Where he, in his poor self so weak, by
Providence was placed.

—Here, Lady! might I cease; but nay,
let us before we part
With this dear holy shepherd-boy
breathe a prayer of earnest heart,
That unto him, where'er shall lie his
life's appointed way,
The Cross, fixed in his soul, may prove
an all-sufficing stay.

XIX

THE POET'S DREAM

SÉQUEL TO THE NORMAN BOY

Just as those final words were penned,
the sun broke out in power,
And gladdened all things; but, as
chanced, within that very hour,
Air blackened, thunder growled, fire
flashed from clouds that hid the sky,
And, for the Subject of my Verse, I
heaved a pensive sigh.

Nor could my heart by second thoughts
from heaviness be cleared,
For bodied forth before my eyes the
cross-crowned hut appeared:
And, while around it, storm as fierce
seemed troubling earth and air,
I saw, within, the Norman Boy kneeling
alone in prayer.

The Child, as if the thunder's voice spake
with articulate call,
Bowed meekly in submissive fear,
before the Lord of All;
His lips were moving; and his eyes,
upraised to sue for grace,
With soft illumination cheered the
dimness of that place.

How beautiful is holiness!—what wonder
if the sight,
Almost as vivid as a dream, produced
a dream at night?

It came with sleep and showed the Boy,
no cherub, not transformed,
But the poor ragged Thing whose ways
my human heart had warned.

He had the dream equipped with wings,
so I took him in my arms,
And lifted from the grassy floor, stilling
his faint alarms,

And bore him high through yielding air
my debt of love to pay,
By giving him, for both our sakes, an
hour of holiday.

I whispered, "Yet a little while, dear
Child! thou art my own,
To show thee some delightful thing, in
country or in town.

What shall it be? a mirthful throng?
or that holy place and calm
St. Denis, filled with royal tombs, or the
Church of Notre Dame?

"St. Owen's golden Shrine? Or choose
what else would please thee most
Of any wonder Normandy, or all proud
France, can boast!"

"My Mother," said the Boy, "was
born near to a blessed Tree,
The Chapel Oak of Allonville; good
Angel, show it me!"

On wings, from broad and steadfast poise
let loose by this reply,
For Allonville, o'er down and dale,
away then did we fly:

O'er town and tower we flew, and fields
in May's fresh verdure drest;
The wings they did not flag: the Child,
thought grave, was not deprest.

But who shall show, to waking sense,
the gleam of light that broke
forth from his eyes, when first the Boy
looked down on that huge oak,
For length of days so much revered, so
famous where it stands
For twofold hallowing—Nature's care,
and work of human hands?

Strong as an Eagle with my charge I
glided round and round
The wide-spread boughs, for view of
door, window, and stair that wound
Gracefully up the gnarled trunk; nor left
we unsurveyed
The pointed steeple peering forth from
the centre of the shade.

I lighted—opened with soft touch the
chapel's iron door,
Past softly, leading in the Boy; and,
while from roof to floor
From floor to roof all round his eyes
the Child with wonder cast,
Pleasure on pleasure crowded in, each
livelier than the last.

For, deftly framed within the trunk,
the sanctuary showed,
By light of lanup and precious stones,
that glimmered here, there glowed,
Shrine, Altar, Image, Offerings lying
in sign of gratitude:

Sight that inspired accordant thoughts;
and speech I thus renewed:

"Hither the Afflicted come, as thou
hast heard thy Mother say,
And, kneeling, supplication make to
our Lady de la Paix;

What mournful sighs have here been
heard, and when the voice was stopt
By sudden pangs; what bitter tears
have on this pavement dropt!

"Poor Shepherd of the naked Down,
a favoured lot is thine,
Far happier lot, dear Boy, than brings
full many to this shrine;

From body-pains and pains of soul thou
needest no release,
Thy hours as they flow on are spent,
if not in joy, in peace.

"Then offer up thy heart to God in
thankfulness and praise,
Give to Him prayers, and many thoughts
in thy most busy days ;
And in His sight the fragile Cross, on
thy small hut, will be
Holy as that which long hath crowned
the Chapel of this Tree ;

"Holy as that far seen which crowns
the sumptuous Church in Rome
Where thousands meet to worship God
under a mighty Dome ;
He sees the bending multitude, he hears
the choral rites,
Yet not the less, in children's hymns
and lonely prayer, delights.

"God for his service needeth not proud
work of human skill ;
They please him best who labour most
to do in peace his will :
So let us strive to live, and to our Spirits
will be given

Such wings, as when our Saviour calls,
shall bear us up to heaven."

The Boy no answer made by words,
but, so earnest was his look,
Sleep fled, and with it fled the dream—
recorded in this book.

Lest all that passed should melt away
in silence from my mind,
As visions still more bright have done,
and left no trace behind.

But oh ! that Country-man of thine,
whose eye, loved Child, can see
A pledge of endless bliss in acts of early
piety,

In verse, which to thy ear might come,
would treat this simple theme,
Nor leave untold our happy flight in
that adventurous dream.

Alas the dream, to thee, poor Boy !
to thee from whom it flowed,

Was nothing, scarcely can be aught,
yet 'twas bounteously bestowed.

If I may dare to cherish hope that
gentle eyes will read

Not loth, and listening Little-ones,
heart-touched, their fancies feed.¹

XX

THE WESTMORELAND GIRL

TO MY GRANDCHILDREN

PART I

Seek who will delight in fable
I shall tell you truth. A Lamb

¹ See note.

Leapt from this steep bank to follow
Cross the brook its thoughtless dam.

Far and wide on hill and valley
Rain had fallen, unceasing rain,
And the bleating mother's Young-one
Struggled with the flood in vain :

But, as chanced, a Cottage-maiden
(Ten years scarcely had she told)
Seeing, plunged into the torrent,
Clasped the Lamb and kept her hold.

Whirled adown the rocky changel,
Sinking, rising, on they go,
Peace and rest, as seems, before them
Only in the lake below.

Oh ! it was a frightful current
Whose fierce wrath the Girl had braved ;
Clap your hands with joy my Hearers,
Shout in triumph, both are saved ;

Saved by courage that with danger
Grew, by strength the gift of love,
And belike a guardian angel
Came with succour from above.

PART II

Now, to a maturer Audience,
Let me speak of this brave Child
Left among her native mountains
With wild Nature to run wild.

So, unwatched by love maternal,
Mother's care no more her guide,
Fared this little bright-eyed Orphan
Even while at her father's side.

Spare your blame, — remembrance
makes him

Loth to rule by strict command ;
Still upon his cheek are living
Touches of her infant hand.

Dear caresses given in pity,
Sympathy that soothed his grief,
As the dying mother witnessed
To her thankful mind's relief.

Time passed on ; the Child was happy,
Like a Spirit of air she moved,
Wayward, yet by all who knew her
For her tender heart beloved.

Scarcely less than sacred passions,
Bred in house, in grove, in field,
Link her with the inferior creatures,
Urge her powers their rights to shield.

Anglers, bent on reckless pastime,
Learn how she can feel alike
Both for tiny harmless minnow
And the fierce, and sharp-toothed pike.

Merciful protectress, kindling
Into anger or disdain ;
Many a captive hath she rescued,
Others saved from lingering pain.

Listen yet awhile :—with patience
Hear the homely truths I tell,
She in Grasmere's old church-steeples
Tolled this day the passing-bell.

Yes, the wild Girl of the mountains
To their echoes gave the sound,
Notice punctual as the minute,
Warning solemn and profound.

She, fulfilling her sire's office,
Rang alone the far-heard knell,
Tribute, by her hand, in sorrow,
Paid to One who loved her well.

When his spirit was departed
On that service she went forth ;
Nor will fail the like to render
When his corse is laid in earth.

What then wants the Child to temper,
In her breast, unruly fire,

To control the froward impulse
And restrain the vague desire ?

Easily a pious training
And a steadfast outward power
Would supplant the weeds and cherish,
In their stead, each opening flower.

Thus the fearless Lamb-deliv'rer,
Woman-grown, meekhearted, sage,
May become a blest example
For her sex, of every age.

Watchful as a wheeling eagle,
Constant as a soaring lark,
Should the country need a heroine,
She might prove our Maid of Arc.

Leave that thought ; and here be uttered
Prayer that Grace divine may raise
Her humane courageous spirit
Up to heaven, thro' peaceful ways.

POEMS FOUNDED ON THE AFFECTIONS

I
THE BROTHERS

" THESE Tourists, heaven preserve us !
needs must live

A profitable life : some glance along,
Rapid and gay, as if the earth were air,
And they were butterflies to wheel about
Long as the summer lasted : some, as
wise,

Perched on the forehead of a jutting crag,
Pencil in hand and book upon the knee,
Will look and scribble, scribble on and
look,

Until a man might travel twelve stout
miles,

Or reap an acre of his neighbour's corn.
But, for that moping Son of Idleness,
Why can he tarry *yonder* ?—In our
church-yard

Is neither epitaph nor monument,
Tombstone nor name—only the turf we
tread

And a few natural graves."

To Jane, his wife,
Thus spake the homely Priest of Enner-
dale.

It was a July evening ; and he sate
Upon the long stone-seat beneath the
eaves

Of his old cottage,—as it chanced,
that day,

Employed in winter's work. Upon the
stone

His wife sate near him, teasing matted
wool,

While, from the twin cards toothed with
glittering wire,

He fed the spindle of his youngest child,
Who, in the open air, with due accord

Of busy hands and back-and-forward
steps,

Her large round wheel was turning.
Towards the field

In which the Parish Chapel stood alone,
Girt round with a bare ring of mossy wall,
While half an hour went by, the Priest
had sent

Many a long look of wonder : and at
last,

Risen from his seat, beside the snow-
white ridge

Of carded wool which the old man had
piled

He laid his implements with gentle care,
Each in the other locked ; and, down the

path

That from his cottage to the church-
yard led,

He took his way, impatient to accost
The Stranger, whom he saw still linger-
ing there.

'Twas one well known to him in former
days,

A Shepherd-lad ; who ere his sixteenth
year

Had left that calling, tempted to entrust
His expectations to the fickle winds

And perilous waters ; with the mariners
A fellow-mariner ;—and so had fared

Through twenty seasons ; but he had
been reared

Among the mountains, and he in his
heart

Was half a shepherd on the stormy seas.
Oft in the piping shrouds had Leonard

heard

The tones of waterfalls, and inland
sounds.

Of caves and trees :—and, when the
regular wind
Between the tropics filled the steady
sail;

And blew with the same breath through
days and weeks,
Lengthening invisibly its weary line
Along the cloudless Main, he, in those
hours

Of tiresome indolence, would often hang
Over the vessel's side, and gaze and gaze ;
And, while the broad blue wave and
sparking foam

Flashed round him images and hues that
wrought

In union with the employment of his
heart,

He, thus by feverish passion overcome,
Even with the organs of his bodily eye,
Below him, in the bosom of the deep,
Saw mountains ; saw the forms of
sheep that grazed

On verdant hills—with dwellings among
trees,

And shepherds clad in the same country
grey

Which he himself had worn¹.

And now, at last,
From perils manifold, with some small
wealth

Acquired by traffic 'mid the Indian
Isles,

To his paternal home he is returned

With a determined purpose to resume
The life he had lived there ; both for the
sake

Of many darling pleasures, and the love
Which to an only brother he has borne
In all his hardships, since that happy
time

When, whether it blew foul or fair, they
two

Were brother-shepherds on their native
hills.

—They were the last of all their race :
and now,

When Leonard had approached his
home, his heart

Failed in him ; and, not venturing to
enquire

Tidings of one so long and dearly loved,
He to the solitary church-yard turned ;

That, as he knew in what particular
spot

His family were laid, he thence might
learn

If still his Brother lived, or to the file
Another grave was added.—He had
found

¹ This description of the Calenture is sketched
from an imperfect recollection of an admirable
one in prose, by Mr. Gilbert, author of the Hur-
ricane.

Another grave,—near which a full
half-hour

He had remained ; but, as he gazed,
there grew

Such a confusion in his memory,
That he began to doubt ; and even to
hope

That he had seen this heap of turf
before,—

That it was not another grave ; but one
He had forgotten. He had lost his path,

As up the vale, that afternoon, he walked
Through fields which once had been

well known to him :

And oh what joy this recollection now
Sent to his heart ! he lifted up his eyes,

And, looking round, imagined that he
saw

Strange alteration wrought on every side
Among the woods and fields, and that
the rocks

And everlasting hills themselves were
changed.

By this the Priest, who down the field
had come,

Unseen by Leonard, at the church-
yard gate

Stopped short,—and thence, at leisure,
limb by limb

Perused him with a gay complacency.
Ay, thought the Vicar, smiling to himself,

'Tis one of those who needs must leave
the path

Of the world's business to go wild alone :
His arms have a perpetual holiday :

The happy man will creep about the fields,
Following his fancies by the hour, to
bring

Tears down his cheek, or solitary smiles
Into his face, until the setting sun

Write fool upon his forehead.—Planted
thus

Beneath a shed that over-arched the gate
Of this rude church-yard, till the stars
appeared

The good Man might have communed
with himself,

But that the Stranger, who had left the
grave,

Approached ; he recognised the Priest
at once,

And, after greetings interchanged, and
given

By Leonard to the Vicar as to one
Unknown to him, this dialogue ensued.

Leonard. You live, Sir, in these dales,
a quiet life :

Your years make up one peaceful family ;
And who would grieve and fret, if, well,

come come

And welcome gone, they are so like each
other,

They cannot be remembered? Scarce
 a funeral
 Comes to this church-yard once in
 eighteen months;
 • And yet, some changes must take place
 among you:
 And you, who dwell here, even among
 these rocks,
 Can trace the finger of mortality.
 And see, that with our threescore years
 and ten
 We are not all that perish.—I remember,
 (For many years ago I passed this road)
 There was a foot-way all along the fields
 By the brook-side—'tis gone—and that
 dark cleft!
 To me it does not seem to wear the face
 Which then it had!
Priest. Nay, Sir, for aught I know,
 That chasm is much the same—
Leonard. But, surely, yonder—
Priest. Ay, there, indeed, your memory
 is a friend
 That does not play you false.—On that
 tall pike
 (It is the loneliest place of all these hills)
 There were two springs which bubbled
 side by side.
 As if they had been made that they
 might be
 Companions for each other: the huge
 crag
 • Was rent with lightning—one hath
 disappeared;
 The other, left behind, is flowing still.
 For accidents and changes such as these
 We want not store of them;—a water-
 spout
 Will bring down half a mountain;
 what a feast
 For folks that wander up and down like
 you
 To see an acre's breadth of that wide cliff
 One roaring cataract! a sharp May-
 storm
 Will come with loads of January snow,
 And in one night send twenty score of
 sheep
 To feed the ravens; or a shepherd dies
 By some untoward death among the
 rocks:
 The ice breaks up and sweeps away a
 bridge;
 A wood is felled:—and then for our
 own homes!
 A child is born or christened; a field
 ploughed,
 A daughter sent to service, a web spun,
 The old house-clock is decked with a
 new face.
 And hence, so far from wanting facts
 or dates
 To chronicle the time, we all have here

A pair of diaries,—one serving, Sir,
 For the whole dale, and one for each
 fire-side—
 Yours was a stranger's judgment: for
 historians,
 Commend me to these valleys!
Leonard. Yet your Church-yard
 Seems, if such freedom may be used
 with you,
 To say that you are heedless of the past:
 An orphan could not find his mother's
 grave:
 Here's neither head nor foot-stone,
 plate of brass,
 Cross-bones nor skull,—type of our
 earthly state
 Nor emblem of our hopes: the dead
 man's home
 Is but a fellow to that pasture-field.
Priest. Why, there, Sir, is a thought
 that's new to me!
 The stone-cutters, 'tis true, might beg
 their bread
 If every English church-yard were like
 ours;
 Yet your conclusion wanders from the
 truth:
 We have no need of names and epitaphs;
 We talk about the dead by our fire-sides.
 And then, for our immortal part! we
 want
 No symbols, Sir, to tell us that plain
 tale:
 The thought of death sits easy on the
 man
 Who has been born and dies among the
 mountains.
Leonard. Your Dalesmen, then, do in
 each other's thoughts
 Possess a kind of second life: no doubt
 You, Sir, could help me to the history
 Of half these graves?
Priest. For eight-score winters past,
 With what I've witnessed, and with
 what I've heard,
 Perhaps I might; and, on a winter
 evening,
 If you were seated at my chimney's nook,
 By turning o'er these hillocks one by one,
 We two could travel, Sir, through a
 strange round:
 Yet all in the broad highway of the
 world.
 Now there's a grave—your foot is half
 upon it,—
 It looks just like the rest; and yet that
 Died broken-hearted.
Leonard. 'Tis a common case.
 We'll take another: who is he that lies
 Beneath yon ridge, the last of those
 three graves?
 It touches on that piece of native rock
 Left in the church-yard wall.

Priest. That's Walter Ewbank.
He had as white a head and fresh a
cheek

As ever were produced by youth and age
Engendering in the blood of hale four-
score.

Through five long generations had the
heart

Of Walter's forefathers o'erflowed the
bounds

Of their inheritance, that single cottage—
You see it yonder! and those few green
fields.

They toiled and wrought, and still,
from sire to son,

Each struggled, and each yielded as
before

A little—yet a little,—and old Walter,
They left to him the family heart, and
land

With other burthens than the crop it bore.
Year after year the old man still kept up

A cheerful mind,—and buffeted with
bond,

Interest, and mortgages; at last he sank,
And went into his grave before his time.

Poor Walter! whether it was care that
spurred him

God only knows, but to the very last
He had the lightest foot in Ennerdale:

His pace was never that of an old man:
I almost see him tripping down the path

With his two grandsons after him:—
but you,

Unless our Landlord be your host to-
night,

Have far to travel,—and on these rough
paths

Even in the longest day of midsummer—
Leonard. But those two Orphans!

Priest. Orphans!—Such they were—
Yet not while Walter lived:—for, though

their parents

Lay buried side by side as now they lie,
The old man was a father to the boys,

Two fathers in one father: and if tears,
Shed when he talked of them where

they were not,

And hauntings from the infirmity of
love,

Are sought of what makes up a mother's
heart,

This old Man, in the day of his old age,
Was half a mother to them.—If you

weep, Sir,
To hear a stranger talking about

strangers,
Heaven, bless you when you are among
your kindred!

Ay—you may turn that way—it is a
grave

Which will bear looking at.
Leonard. These boys—I hope

They loved this good old Man?—

Priest. They did—and truly:
But that was what we almost overlooked,

They were such darlings of each other.
Yes,

Though from the cradle they had lived
with Walter,

The only kinsman near them, and though
he

Inclined to both by reason of his age,
With a more fond, familiar, tenderness;

They, notwithstanding, had much love
to spare,

And it all went into each other's hearts.
Leonard, the elder by just eighteen

months,

Was two years taller: 'twas a joy to see,
To hear, to meet them!—From their

house the school
Is distant three short miles, and in the
time

Of storm and thaw, when every water-
course

And unbridged stream, such as you may
have noticed

Crossing our roads at every hundred
steps,

Was swollen into a noisy rivulet,
Would Leonard then, when elder boys

remained

At home, go staggering through the
slippery fords,

Bearing his brother on his back. I have
seen him,

On windy days, in one of those stray
brooks,

Ay, more than once I have seen him,
mid-leg deep,

Their two books lying both on a dry
stone,

Upon the hither side: and once I said,
As I remember, looking round these rocks

And hills on which we all of us were born,
That God who made the great book of

the world
Would bless such piety—

Leonard. It may be then—
Priest. Never did worthier lads break

English bread;
The very brightest Sunday Autumn saw

With all its mealy clusters of ripe nuts,
Could never keep those boys away

from church,
Or tempt them to an hour of sabbath

breach.
Leonard and James! I warrant, every

corner
Among these rocks, and every hollow

place
That venturesome foot could reach, to

one or both
Was known as well as to the flowers
that grow there.

Like roe-bucks they went bounding
o'er the hills;
They played like two young ravens
on the crags:
Then they could write, ay and speak
too, as well
As many of their betters—and for
Leonard!

The very night before he went away,
In my own house I put into his hand
A bible, and I'd wager house and field
That, if he be alive, he has it yet.

Leonard. It seems, these Brothers
have not lived to be

A comfort to each other—

Priest. That they might
Live to such end is what both old and
young

In this our valley all of us have wished.
And what, for my part, I have often
prayed:

But Leonard—

Leonard. Then James still is left
among you!

Priest. 'Tis ^{of} the elder brother I
am speaking:

They had an uncle—he was at that
time

A thriving man, and trafficked on the
seas:

And, but for that same uncle, to this
hour

Leonard had never handled rope or
shroud:

For the boy loved the life which we
lead here;

And though of unripe years, a stripling
only,

His soul was knit to this his native soil.
But, as I said, old Walter was too weak

To strive with such a torrent; when he
died,

The estate and house were sold; and
all their sheep,

A pretty flock, and which, for aught I
know,

Had clothed the Ewbanks for a thousand
years:—

Well—all was gone, and they were
destitute,

And Leonard, chiefly for his Brother's
sake,

Resolved to try his fortune on the
seas.

Twelve years are past since we had
tidings from him.

If there were one among us who had
heard

That Leonard Ewbank was come home
again,

From the Great Gavel, down by Leeza's
banks,

1. The Great Gavel, so called, I imagine, from
W.P.

And down the Enna, far as Egremont,
The day would be a joyous festival;
And those two bells of ours, which
there you see—

Hanging in the open air—but, O good
Sir!

This is sad talk—they'll never sound
for him—

Living or dead.—When last we heard
of him,

He was in slavery among the Moors
Upon the Barbary coast.—'Twas not a
little

That would bring down his spirit;
and no doubt,

Before it ended in his death, the Youth
Was sadly, crossed.—Poor Leonard!

when we parted,

He took me by the hand, and said to me,
If e'er he should grow rich, he would
return,

To live in peace upon his father's land,
And lay his bones among us.

Leonard. If that day
Should come, 't would needs be a glad
day for him;

He would himself, no doubt, be happy
then

As any that should meet him—

Priest. Happy! Sir—

Leonard. You said his kindred all
were in their graves,

And that he had one Brother—

Priest. That is but
A fellow-tale of sorrow. From his youth
James, though not sickly, yet was
delicate;

And Leonard being always by his side
Had done so many offices about him,

That, though he was not of a timid
nature,

Yet still the spirit of a mountain-boy
In him was somewhat checked; and,

when his Brother

Was gone to sea, and he was left alone,
The little colour that he had was soon

Stolen from his cheek; he drooped,
and pined, and pined—

Leonard. But these are all the graves
of full grown men!

Priest. Ay, Sir, that passed away: we
took him to us;

He was the child of all the dale—he lived
Three months with one, and six months
with another;

its resemblance to the gable end of a house, is
one of the highest of the Cumberland mountains.

It stands at the head of the several vales of
Ennerdale, Wastdale, and Borrowdale.

The Leeza is a river which flows into the Lake
of Ennerdale: on issuing from the Lake, it
changes its name, and is called the End, Eyne,
or Enna. It falls into the sea a little below
Egremont.

And wanted neither food, nor clothes,
nor love :

And many, many happy days were his.
But, whether blithe or sad, 'tis my
belief

His absent Brother still was at his
heart.

And, when he dwelt beneath our roof
we found

(A practice till this time unknown to him)

That often, rising from his bed at night,
He in his sleep would walk about, and
sleeping

He sought his brother Leonard.—You
are moved !

Forgive me, Sir : before I spoke to you,
I judged you most unkindly !

Leonard. But this Youth,
How did he die at last ?

Priest. One sweet May-morning,
(It will be twelve years since when
Spring returns)

He had gone forth among the new-
dropped lambs,

With two or three companions, whom
their course

Of occupation led from height to height
Under a cloudless sun—till he, at length,

Through weariness, or, haply, to indulge
The humour of the moment, lagged
behind.

You see yon precipice ;—it wears the
shape

Of a vast building made of many crags ;
And in the midst is one particular rock

That rises like a column from the vale,
Whence by our shepherds it is called,

THE PILLAR.

Upon its æery summit crowned with
heath,

The loiterer, not unnoticed by his com-
rades,

Lay stretched at ease ; but, passing by
the place

On their return, they found that he was
gone.

No ill was feared ; till one of them by
chance

Entering, when evening was far spent,
the house

Which at that time was James's home,
there learned

That nobody had seen him all that day :
The morning came, and still he was
unheard of :

The neighbours were alarmed, and to
the brook

Some hastened ; some ran to the lake :
ere noon

They found him at the foot of that same
rock

Dead, and with mangled limbs. The
third day after

I buried him, poor Youth, and there he
lies !

Leonard. And that then is his grave !—
Before his death

You say that he saw many happy years ?

Priest. Ay, that he did—
Leonard. And all went well

with him ?—
Priest. If he had one, the youth had
twenty homes.

Leonard. And you believe, then, that
his mind was easy ?—

Priest. Yes, long before he died, he
found that time

Is a true friend to sorrow ; and unless
His thoughts were turned on Leonard's

luckless fortune, [love,
He talked about him with a cheerful

Leonard. He could not come to an
unhallowed end !

Priest. Nay, God forbid !—You recol-
lect I mentioned

A habit which disquietude and grief
Had brought upon him ; and we all

conjectured
That, as the day was warm, he had
lain down.

On the soft heath, and, waiting for
his comrades,

He there had fallen asleep ; that in
his sleep

He to the margin of the precipice
Had walked, and from the summit had

fallen headlong :
And so no doubt he perished. When

the Youth
Fell, in his hand he must have grasp'd,

we think,
His shepherd's staff ; for on that

Pillar of rock
It had been caught mid way ; and

there for years
It hung ;—and mouldered there.

The Priest here ended—
The Stranger would have thanked him,

but he felt
A gushing from his heart, that took
away

The power of speech. Both left the spot
in silence ;

And Leonard, when they reached the
church-yard gate,

As the Priest lifted up the latch, turned
round—

And, looking at the grave, he said,
“ My Brother ! ”

The Vicar did not hear the words : and
now,

He pointed towards his dwelling-place,
entreating

That Leonard would partake his homely
fare :

The other thanked him with an earnest voice;
But added, that, the evening being calm,
He would pursue his journey. So they
parted.

It was not long ere Leonard reached a grove

That overhung the road: he there
stopped short,
And, sitting down beneath the trees,
reviewed

All that the Priest had said: his early
years

Were with him:—his long absence,
cherished hopes,

And thoughts which had been his an
hour before,

All pressed on him with such a weight,
that now,

This vale, where he had been so happy,
seemed

A place in which he could not bear to
live:

So he relinquished all his purposes.
He travelled back to Egremory: and

thence,
That night, he wrote a letter to the
Priest,

Reminding him of what had passed
between them:

And adding, with a hope to be forgiven,
That it was from the weakness of his

heart
He had not dared to tell him who he was.

This done, he went on shipboard, and is
now

A Seaman, a grey-headed Mariner.

1800.

II

ARTEGAL AND ELIDURE

(SEE THE CHRONICLE OF GEOFFREY OF
MONMOUTH AND MILTON'S HISTORY
OF ENGLAND)

WHERE be the temples which, in Britain's
Isle,

For his paternal Gods, the Trojan
raised?

Gone like a morning dream, or like a
pale

Of clouds that in cerulean ether blazed!
Ere Julius landed on her white-cliffed

shore,
They sank, delivered o'er

To fatal dissolution; and, I ween,
No vestige then was left that such had

ever been.

Nathless, a British record (long con-
cealed,

In old Armorica, whose secret springs
No Gothic conqueror ever drank)

revealed

The marvellous current of forgotten
things;

How Brutus came, by oracles impelled,
And Albion's giants quelled,

A hood whom no civility could melt,
Who never tasted grace, and goodness

ne'er had felt."

By brave Corineus aided, he subdued,
And rooted out the intolerable kind;

And this too-long-polluted land imbued
With goodly arts and usages refined;

Whence golden harvests, cities, warlike
towers.

And pleasure's sumptuous bowers;
Whence all the fixed delights of house

and home.
Friendships that will not break, and love

that cannot roam.

O, happy Britain! region all too fair
For self-delighting fancy to endure

That silence only should inhabit there,
Wild beasts, or uncouth savages impure!

But, intermingled with the generous
seed,

Grew many a poisonous weed:
Thus fares it still with all that takes

its birth
From human care, or grows upon the

breast of earth.

Hence, and how soon! that war of
vengeance waged

By Guendolen against her faithless
lord;

Till she, in jealous fury unassuaged
Had slain his paramour with ruthless

sword:
Then, into Severn hideously defiled,

She flung her blameless child,
Sabrina,—vowing that the stream should

bear
That name through every age, her

hatred to declare.

So speaks the Chronicle, and tells of
Lear

By his ungrateful daughters turned
adrift.

Ye lightnings, hear his voice!—they
cannot hear,

Nor can the winds restore his simple
gift.

But One there is, a Child of nature meek,
Who comes her Sire to seek;

And he, recovering sense, upon her
breast

Leans smilingly, and sinks into a perfect
rest.

There too we read of Spenser's fairy
themes,

And those that Milton loved in youthful
years;

The sage enchanter Merlin's subtle schemes ;

The feats of Arthur and his knightly peers ;

Of Arthur,—who, to upper light restored,
With that terrific sword

Which yet he brandishes for future war,

Shall lift his country's fame above
the polar star !

What wonder, then, if in such ample field

Of old tradition, one particular flower
Doth seemingly in vain its fragrance yield,

And bloom unnoticed even to this late hour ?

Now, gentle Muses, your assistance grant,

While I this flower transplant
Into a garden stored with Poesy ;

Where flowers and herbs unite, and haply some weeds be,

That, wanting not wild grace, are from
all mischief free !

A KING more worthy of respect
and love

Than wise Gorbonian ruled not in his day ;

And grateful Britain prospered far
above

All neighbouring countries through his
righteous sway ;

He poured rewards and honours on
the good ;

The oppressor he withstood ;
And while he served the Gods with
reverence due

Fields smiled, and temples rose, and
towns and cities grew.

He died, whom Artegal succeeds—his
son ;

But how unworthy of that sire was he !
A hopeful reign, auspiciously begun.

Was darkened soon by foul iniquity.
From crime to crime he mounted, till
at length

The nobles leagued their strength
With a vexed people, and the tyrant
chased ;

And, on the vacant throne, his worthier
Brother placed.

From realm to realm the humbled
Exile went,

Suppliant for aid his kingdom to regain ;
In many a court, and many a warrior's
tent,

He urged his persevering suit in vain.
Him, in whose wretched heart ambition
failed,

Dire poverty assailed ;

And, tired with slight his pride no
more could brook,

He towards his native country cast a
longing look.

Fair blew the wished-for wind—the
voyage sped ;

He landed ; and, by many dangers
scared,

“ Poorly provided, poorly followed,”
To Calaterium's forest he repaired.

How changed from him who, born to
highest place,

Had swayed the royal mace,
Flattered and feared, despised yet
deified,

In Troynovant, his seat by silver
Thames's side !

From that wild region where the crown-
less King

Lay in concealment with his scanty train,
Supporting life by water from the
spring,

And such chance food as outlaws can
obtain,

Unto the few whom he esteems his
friends

A messenger he sends ;
And from their secret loyalty requires
Shelter and daily bread,—the sum of
his desires.

While he the issue waits, at early morn
Wandering by stealth abroad, he
chanced to hear

A startling outcry made by hound and
horn,

From which the tusky wild boar flies
in fear ;

And, scouring toward him o'er the
grassy plain,

Behold the hunter train !
He bids his little company advance
With seeming unconcern and steady
countenance.

The royal Elidure, who leads the chase,
Hath checked his foaming courser :—
can it be !

Methinks that I should recognise that
face,

Though much disguised by long adver-
sity !

He gazed rejoicing, and again he gazed,
Confounded and amazed—

“ It is the king, my brother !” and, by
sound

Of his own voice confirmed, he leaps
upon the ground.

Long, strict, and tender was the embrace
he gave,

Feebly returned by daunted Artegal ;
Whose natural affection doth enslave,

And apprehensions dark and criminal,
Loth to restrain the moving interview,
The attendant lords withdrew;
And, while they stood upon the plain
apart.

Thus Elidure, by words, relieved his
struggling heart.

"By heavenly Powers conducted, we
have met;

—O Brother! to my knowledge lost
so long.

But neither lost to love nor to regret,
Nor to my wishes lost;—forgive the
wrong.

(Such it may seem) if I thy crown have
borne,

Thy royal mantle worn:
I was their natural guardian; and 'tis
just

That now I should restore what hath
been held in trust."

A while the astonished Artegal stood
mute,

Then thus exclaimed: "To me, of
titles shorn,

And stripped of power! me, feeble,
destitute,

To me a kingdom! spare the bitter
scorn;

If justice ruled the breast of foreign
kings,

Then, on the wide-spread wings
Of war, had I returned to claim my
right;

This will I here avow, not dreading thy
despite."

"I do not blame thee," Elidure replied;
"But, if my looks did with my words
agree,

I should at once be trusted, not defied,
And thou from all disquietude be free.

May the unsullied Goddess of the chase,
Who to this blessed place

At this blest moment led me, if I speak
With insincere intent, on me her ven-
geance wreak?

Were this same spear, which in my hand
I grasp,

The British sceptre, here would I to thee
The symbol yield; and would undo this
clasp,

If it confined the robe of sovereignty
Odious to me the pomp of regal court,

And joyless sylvan sport,
While thou art roving, wretched and
forlorn,

Thy couch the dewy earth, thy roof the
forest thorn!"

Then Artegal thus spake: "I only
sought,

Within this realm a place of safe retreat;
Beware of rousing an ambitious thought;
Beware of kindling hopes, for me un-
meet!

Thou art reputed wise, but in my mind
Art pitifully blind:

Full soon this generous purpose thou
may'st rue,

When that which has been done no
wishes can undo.

Who, when a crown is fixed upon his
head,

Would balance claim with claim, and
right with right?

But thou—I know not how inspired,
how led—

Wouldst change the course of things in
all men's sight!

And this for one who cannot imitate
Thy virtue, who may hate:

For, if, by such strange sacrifice re-
stored,

He reign, thou still must be his king,
and sovereign lord;

Lifted in magnanimity above
Aught that my feeble nature could

perform,
Or even conceive; surpassing me in love

Far as in power the eagle doth the
worm:

I, Brother! only should be king in name,
And govern to my shame;

A shadow in a hated land, while all
Of glad or willing service to thy share
would fall."

"Believe it not," said Elidure; "respect
Awaits on virtuous life, and ever most
Attends on goodness with dominion
decked,

Which stands the universal empire's
boast;

This can thy own experience testify:
Nor shall thy foes deny

That, in the gracious opening of thy
reign,

Our father's spirit seemed in thee to
breathe again.

And what if o'er that bright unbosoming
Clouds of disgrace and envious fortune
past!

Have we not seen the glories of the
spring

By veil of noontide darkness overcast?
The frith that glittered like a warrior's
shield,

The sky, the gay green field,
Are vanished; gladness ceases in the
groves,

And trepidation strikes the blackened
mountain-caves.

But is that gloom dissolv'd? how
 passing clear
 Seems the wide world, far brighter
 than before!

Even so thy latent worth will re-appear,
 Gladdening the people's heart from
 shore to shore:

For youthful faults ripe virtues shall
 atone;

Re-seated on thy throne,
 Proof shalt thou furnish that misfortune,
 pain,

And sorrow, have confirmed thy native
 right to reign.

But, not to overlook what thou may'st
 know,

Thy enemies are neither weak nor few;
 And circumspect must be our course,
 and slow,

Or from my purpose ruin may ensue.
 Dismiss thy followers;—let them calmly
 wait

Such change in thy estate
 As I already have in thought devised;
 And which, with caution due, may soon
 be realised."

The Story tells what courses were pur-
 sued,

Until king Elidure, with full consent
 Of all his peers, before the multitude,
 Rose,—and, to consummate this just
 intent,

Did place upon his brother's head the
 crown,

Relinquish'd by his own;
 Then to his people cried, "Receive your
 lord,

Gorbonian's first-born son, your right-
 ful king restored!"

The people answered with a loud acclaim:
 Yet more;—heart-smitten by the heroic
 deed,

The reinstated Artégel became
 Earth's noblest penitent; from bondage
 free!

O' vice—thenceforth unable to subvert
 Or shake his high desert.

Long did he reign; and, when he died,
 the tear

Of universal grief bedew'd his honoured
 bier.

Thus was a Brother by a Brothersaved;
 With whom a crown (temptation that
 hath set

Discord in hearts of men till they have
 braved

Their nearest kin with deadly purpose
 met)

'Gainst duty weigh'd, and faithful love,
 did seem

A thing of no esteem;

And, from this triumph of affection pure,
 He bore the lasting name of "pious
 Elidure!"

1815.

III

TO A BUTTERFLY

I've watch'd you now a full half-hour,
 Self-poised upon that yellow flower;

And, little Butterfly! indeed
 I know not if you sleep or feed.

How motionless!—not frozen seas
 More motionless! and then

What joy awaits you, when the breeze
 Hath found you out among the trees,
 And calls you forth again!

This plot of orchard-ground is ours;
 My trees they are, my Sister's flowers;
 Here rest your wings when they are
 weary;

Here lodge as in a sanctuary!
 Come often to us, fear no wrong;

Sit near us on the bough!
 We'll talk of sunshine and of song,

And summer days, when we were young;
 Sweet childish days, that were as long
 As twenty days are now.

1801.

IV

A FAREWELL

FAREWELL, thou little Nook of mountain-
 ground,

Thou rocky corner in the lowest stair
 Of that magnificent temple which doth
 bound

One side of our whole vale with grandeur
 rare;

Sweet garden-orchard, eminently fair,
 The loveliest spot that man hath ever
 found,

Farewell!—we leave thee to Heaven's
 peaceful care.

Thee, and the Cottage which thou dost
 surround.

Our boat is safely anchored by the shore,
 And there will safely ride when we are
 gone;

The flowering shrubs that deck our
 humble door

Will prosper, though untended and
 alone;

Fields, goods, and far-off chattels we
 have none;

These narrow bounds contain our private
 store

Of things earth makes, and sun doth
 shine upon;

Here are they in our sight—we have no
 more.

Sunshine and shower be with you, bud
 and bell!

For two months now in vain we shall be
sought ;
We leave you here in solitude to dwell
With these our latest gifts of tender
thought ;
Thou, like the morning, in thy saffron
coat,
Bright, gowan, and marsh-marigold,
farewell !
Whom from the borders of the Lake we
brought,
And placed together near our rocky
Well.

We go for One to whom ye will be dear ;
And she will prize this Bower, this
Indian shed,
Our own contrivance, Building without
peer !
—A gentle Maid, whose heart is lowly
bred,
Whose pleasures are in wild fields
gathered,
With joyousness, and with a thoughtful
cheer,
Will come to you ; to you herself will
we
And love the blessed life that we lead
here.

Dear Spot ! which we have watched
with tender heed,
Bringing thee chosen plants and blossoms
blown
Among the distant mountains, flower
and weed,
Which thou hast taken to thee as thy
own,
Making all kindness registered and
known ;
Thou for our sakes, though Nature's
child indeed,
Fair in thyself and beautiful alone.
Hast taken gifts which thou dost little
need.

And O most constant, yet most fickle
Place,
That hast thy wayward moods, as thou
dost show
To them who look not daily on thy face ;
Who, being loved, in love no bounds
dost know,
And say'st, when we forsake thee, " Let
them go !"
Thou easy-hearted Thing, with thy wild
of race
Of weeds and flowers, till we return be
slow,
And travel with the year at a soft pace.
Help us to tell Her tales of years gone
by,
And this sweet spring, the best beloved
and best ;

Joy will be flown in its mortality ;
Something must stay to tell us of the
rest.
Here, thronged with primroses, the
steep rock's breast
Glittered at evening like a starry sky ;
And in this bush our sparrow built her
nest,
Of which I sang one song that will not
die
O happy Garden ! whose seclusion deep
Hath been so friendly to industrious
hours ;
And to soft slumbers, that did gently
steep
Our spirits, carrying with them dreams
of flowers,
And wild notes warbled among leafy
bowers ;
Two burning months let summer over-
leap,
And, coming back with Her who will be
ours,
Into thy bosom we again shall creep.
1802.

STANZAS

WRITTEN IN MY POCKET-COPY OF THOM-
SON'S CASTLE OF INDOLENCE
WITHIN our happy Castle there dwelt
One
Whom without blame I may not over-
look ;
For never sun on living creature shone
Who more devout enjoyment with us
took ;
Here on his hours he hung as on a book,
On his own time here would he float
away,
As doth a fly upon a summer brook ;
But go to-morrow, or belike to-day,
Seek for him,—he is fled ; and whither
none can say.

Thus often would he leave our peaceful
home,
And find elsewhere his business or
delight ;
Out of our Valley's limits did he roam :
Full many a time, upon a stormy night,
His voice came to us from the neigh-
bouring height :
Oft could we see him driving full in
view
At mid-day when the sun was shining
bright ;
What ill was on him, what he had to do,
A mighty wonder bred among our quiet
crew.
Ah ! piteous sight it was to see this Man
When he came back to us, a withered
flower,—

Or like a sinful creature, pale and wan.
Down would he sit; and without
strength or power

Look at the common grass from hour to
hour:

And oftentimes, how long I fear to say,
Where apple-trees in blossom made a
bower,

Retired in that sunshiny shade he lay;
And, like a naked Indian, slept himself
away.

Great wonder to our gentle tribe it was
Whenever from our Valley he withdrew;
For happier soul no living creature his
Than he had, being here the long day
through.

Some thought he was a lover, and did
woo:

Some thought far worse of him, and
judged him wrong;

But verse was what he had been wedded
to;

And his own mind did like a tempest
strong

Come to him thus, and drove the weary
Wight along.

With him there often walked in friendly
guise,

Or lay upon the moss by brook or tree,
A noticeable Man with large grey eyes,
And a pale face that seemed undoubtedly
As if a blooming face it ought to be;
Heavy his low-hung lip did oft appear,
Deprest by weight of musing Phantasy;
Profound his forehead was, though not
severe;

Yet some did think that he had little
business here.

Sweet heaven forefend! his was a law-
ful right;

Noisy he was, and gamesome as a boy;
His limbs would toss about him with
delight

Like branches when strong winds the
trees annoy.

Nor lacked his calmer hours device or
toy

To banish listlessness and irksome care;
He would have taught you how you
might employ

Yourself; and many did to him repair,—
And certes not in vain; he had inven-
tions rare.

Expedients, too, of simplest sort he
tried:

Long blades of grass, plucked round him
as he lay;

Made, to his ear attentively applied,
A pipe on which the wind would deftly
play;

Glasses he had, that little things dis-
play,

The beetle panoplied in gems and gold,
A mailed angel on a battle-day;

The mysteries that cups of flowers
enfold,

And all the gorgeous sights which fairies
do behold.

He would entice that other Man to hear
His music, and to view his imagery:
And, sooth, these two were each to the
other dear:

No livelier love in such a place could be;
There did they dwell—from earthly
labour free,

As happy spirits as were ever seen;
If but a bird, to keep them company,
Or butterfly sate down, they were, I
ween,

As pleased as if the same had been a
Maiden-queen.

1802.

VI

LOUISA

AFTER ACCOMPANYING HER, ON MOUNTAIN
TAIN EXCURSION

I MET Louisa in the shade,
And, having seen that lovely Maid,
Why should I fear to say
That, nymph-like, she is fleet and strong,
And down the rocks can leap along
Like rivulets in May?

She loves her fire, her cottage-home;
Yet o'er the moorland will she roam
In weather rough and bleak;
And, when against the wind she strains,
Oh! might I kiss the mountain rains
That sparkle on her cheek.

Take all that's mine "beneath the moon,"
If I with her but halt a noon
May sit beneath the walls
Of some old cave, or mossy nook,
When up she winds along the brook
To hunt the waterfalls.

1805.

VII

STRANGE fits of passion have I known:
And I will dare to tell,
But in the Lover's ear alone,
What once to me befel.

When she I loved looked every day
Fresh as a rose in June,
I to her cottage bent my way,
Beneath an evening-moon.

Upon the moon I fixed my eye,
All over the wide lea;
With quickening pace my horse drew
nigh

Those paths so dear to me.

And now we reached the orchard-plot;
And, as we climbed the hill;
The sinking moon to Lucy's cot,
Came near, and nearer still.

In one of those sweet dreams I slept,
Kind Nature's gentlest boon!
And all the while my eyes I kept
On the descending moon.

My horse moved on; hoof after hoof
He raised, and never stopped:
When down behind the cottage roof,
At once, the bright moon dropped.

What fond and wayward thoughts will
slide

Into a Lover's head!
"O mercy!" to myself I cried,
"If Lucy should be dead!"

1799.

VIII

She dwelt among the untrodden ways
Beside the spring of Dove,
A Maid whom there were none to praise
And very few to love:

A violet by a mossy stone
Half hidden from the eye!
—Fair as a star, when only one
Is shining in the sky.

She lived unknown, and few could
know

When Lucy ceased to be;
But she is in her grave, and, oh,
The difference to me!

1799.

IX

I TRAVELLED among unknown men,
In lands beyond the sea;
Nor, England! did I know till then
What love I bore to thee.

'Tis past, that melancholy dream!
Nor will I quit thy shore
A second time; for still I seem
To love thee more and more.

Among thy mountains did I feel
The joy of my desire;
And she I cherished turned her wheel
Beside an English fire.

Thy mornings showed, thy nights con-
cealed
The bowers where Lucy played;
And thine too is the last green field
That Lucy's eyes surveyed.

1799.

X

ERE with cold beads of midnight dew
Had mingled tears of thine,
I grieved, fond Youth! that thou shouldst
To haught, Geraldine.

[sue

Immoveable by generous sighs,
She glories in a train
Who drag, beneath our native skies,
An oriental chain.

Pine not like them with arms across,
Forgetting in thy care
How the fast-rooted trees can toss
Their branches in mid air.

The humblest rivulet will take
Its own wild liberties;
And, every day, the imprisoned lake
Is flowing in the breeze.

Then, crouch no more on suppliant knee,
But scorn with scorn outbrave;
A Briton, even in love, should be
A subject, not a slave!

1826.

XI

TO—

Look at the fate of summer flowers,
Which blow at daybreak, droop ere
even-song;
And, grieved for their brief date, confess
that ours,
Measured by what we are and ought to
be,

Measured by all that, trembling, we
foresee,
Is not so long!

If human Life do pass away,
Perishing yet more swiftly than the
flower,

If we are creatures of a winter's day;
What space hath Virgin's beauty to dis-
close

Her sweets, and triumph o'er the breath-
ing rose?

Not even an hour!

The deepest grove whose foliage hid
The happiest lovers Arcady might boast,
Could not the entrance of this thought
forbid:

O be thou wise as they, soul-gifted Maid!
Nor rate too high what must so quickly
fade,

So soon be lost.

Then shall love teach some virtuous
Youth

"To draw, out of the object of his eyes,"
The while on thee they gaze in simple-
truth,

Hues more exalted, "a refined Form,"
That dreads not age, nor suffers from
the worm,

And never dies.

1824.

XII

THE FORSAKEN

THE peace which others seek they find;
The heaviest storms not longest last;

Heaven grants even to the guiltiest mind
An amnesty for what is past ;
When will my sentence be reversed ?
I only pray to know the worst ;
And wish as if my heart would burst.

O weary struggle ! silent years
Tell seemingly no doubtful tale ;
And yet they leave it short, and fears
And hopes are strong and will prevail.
My calmest faith escapes not pain ;
And, feeling that the hope is vain,
I think that he will come again.

XIII

'Tis said, that some have died for love :
And here and there a church-yard grave
is found

In the cold north's unhallowed ground,
Because the wretched man himself had
slain,

His love was such a grievous pain.
And there is one whom I five years
have known ;

He dwells alone
Upon Helvellyn's side :
He loved—the pretty Barbara died ;
And thus he makes his moan :

Three years had Barbara in her grave
been laid
When thus his moan he made :

" Oh, move, thou Cottage, from behind
that oak !

Or let the aged tree uprooted lie,
That in some other way yon smoke
May mount into the sky !

The clouds pass on ; they from the
heavens depart :

I look—the sky is empty space ;
I know not what I trace ;

But when I cease to look, my hand is on
my heart.

O ! what a weight is in these shades !
Ye leaves,

That murmur once so dear, when will
it cease ?

Your sound my heart of rest bereaves,
It robs my heart of peace.

Thou Thrush, that singest loud—and
loud and free,

Inter yon row of willows flit,
Upon that alder sit :

Or sing another song, or choose another
tree.

Roll back, sweet Rill ! back to thy
mountain-bounds.

And there for ever be thy waters chained !
For thou dost haunt the air with sounds
That cannot be sustained ;

Still beneath that pine-tree's ragged
bough
Headlong yon waterfall must come,

Oh let it then be dumb !
Be anything, sweet Rill, but that which
thou art now.

Thou Eglantine, so bright with sunny
showers,

Proud as a rainbow spanning half the
vale,

Thou one fair shrub, oh ! shed thy
flowers,

And stir not in the gale.
For thus to see thee nodding in the air,
To see thy arch thus stretch and bend,

Thus rise and thus descend,—
Disturbs me till the sight is more than
I can bear."

The Mañ who makes this feverish com-
plaint

Is one of giant stature, who could dance
Equipped from head to foot in iron
mail.

Ah gentle Love ! if ever thought was
thine

To store up kindred hours for me, thy
face

Turn from me, gentle Love ! nor let me
walk

Within the sound of Eterna's voice, nor
know

Such happiness as I have known to-day.
1800.

XIV

A COMPLAINT

THERE is a change—and I am poor ;
Your love hath been, nor long ago,

A fountain at my fond heart's door,
Whose only business was to flow ;

And flow it did ; not taking heed
Of its own bounty, of my need.

What happy moments did I count !
Blest was I then all bliss above !

Now, for that consecrated fount
Of murmuring, sparkling, living love,

What have I ? shall I dare to tell ?
A comfortless and hidden well.

A well of love—it may be deep—
I trust it is,—and never dry :

What matter ? if the waters sleep
In silence and obscurity.

—Such change, and at the very door
Of my fond heart, hath made me poor.

1806.

XV

TO —

LET other bards of angels sing,
Bright suns without a spot ;

But thou art no such perfect thing :
Rejoice that thou art not !

Heed not tho' none should call thee fair,
So, Mary, let it be

If nought in loveliness compare
With what thou art to me.

True beauty dwells in deep retreats,
Whose veil is unremoved
• Till heart with heart in concord beats,
And the lover is beloved.

1824.

XVI

Yes! thou art fair, yet be not moved
To scorn the declaration,
That sometimes I in thee have loved
My fancy's own creation.

Imagination needs, must stir;
Dear Maid, this truth believe,
Minds that have nothing to confer
Find little to perceive.

Be pleased that nature made thee fit
To feed my heart's devotion,
By laws to which all Forms submit
In sky, air, earth, and ocean.

XVII

How rich that forehead's calm expanse!
How bright that heaven-directed glance!
—Waft her to glory, winged Powers,
Ere sorrow be renewed,
And intercourse with mortal hours
Bring back a humbler mood!
So looked Cecilia when she drew
An Angel from his station;
So looked; not ceasing to pursue
Her tuneful adoration!

But hand and voice alike are still;
No sound here sweeps away the will
That gave it birth: in service meek
One upright arm sustains the cheek,
And one across the bosom lies—
That rose, and now forgets to rise,
Subdued by breathless harmonies
Of meditative feeling;

Mute strains from worlds beyond the
skies,

Through the pure light of female eyes,
Their sanctity revealing!

1824.

XVIII

WHAT heavenly smiles! O Lady mine
Through my very heart they shine;
And, if my brow gives back their light,
Do thou look gladly on the sight:
As the clear Moon with modest pride,
Beholds her own bright beams
Reflected from the mountain's side
• And from the headlong streams.

XIX

TO —

• O DEARER far than light and life are
dear,
Full oft our human foresight I deplore;

Trembling, through my unworthiness,
with fear
That friends, by death disjoined, may
meet no more!

Misgivings, hard to vanquish or control,
Mix with the day, and cross the hour of
rest;

While all the future, for thy purer
soul,

With "sober certainties" of love is blest.

That sigh of thine, not meant for human
ear,

Tells that these words thy humbleness
offend:

Yet hear me up—else faltering in the
rear

Of a steep march: support me to the
end.

Peace settles where the intellect is meek.
And Love is dutiful in thought and
deed;

Through Thee communion with that
Love I seek:

The faith Heaven strengthens where he
moulds the Creed.

1824.

XX

LAMENT OF MARY QUEEN OF
SCOTS

ON THE EVE OF A NEW YEAR

SMILE of the Moon!—for so I name
That silent greeting from above;
A gentle flash of light that came
From her whom drooping captives love;
Or art thou of still higher birth?
Thou that didst part the clouds of earth,
My torpor to reprove!

Bright boon of pitying Heaven!—alas,
I may not trust thy placid cheer!
Pondering that Time to-night will pass
The threshold of another year;
For years to me are sad and dull;
My very moments are too full
Of hopelessness and fear.

And yet, the soul-awakening gleam,
That struck perchance the farthest cone
Of Scotland's rocky wilds, did seem
To visit me, and me alone;
Me, unapproached by any friend,
Save those who to my sorrows lend
Tears due unto their own.

To-night the church-tower bells will ring
Through these wild realms a festive peal;
To the new year a welcoming;

A tuneful offering for the weal
Of happy millions lulled in sleep ;
While I am forced to watch and weep,
By wounds that may not heal.

Born all too high, by wedlock raised
Still higher—to be cast thus low !
Would that mine eyes had never gazed
On aught of more ambitious show
Than the sweet flowerets of the fields !
—It is my royal state that yields
This bitterness of woe.

VI

Yet how ?—for I, if there be truth *
In the world's voice, was passing fair ;
And beauty, for confiding youth,
Those shocks of passion can prepare
That kill the bloom before its time ;
And blanch, without the owner's crime,
The most resplendent hair.

VII

Unblest distinction ! showered on me
To bind a lingering life in chains :
All that could quit my grasp, or flee,
Is gone ;—but not the subtle stains
Fixed in the spirit ; for even here
Can I be proud that jealous fear
Of what I was remains.

VIII

A Woman rules my prison's key ;
A sister Queen, against the bent
Of law and holiest sympathy,
Detains me, doubtful of the event ;
Great God, who feel'st for my distress,
My thoughts are all that I possess,
O keep them innocent !

IX

Farewell desire of human aid,
Which abject mortals vainly court !
By friends deceived, by foes betrayed,
Of fears the prey, of hopes the sport ;
Nought but the world-redeeming Cross
Is able to supply my loss,
My burthen to support.

X

Hark ! the death-note of the year
Sounded by the castle-clock !
From her sunk eyes a stagnant tear
Stole forth, unsettled by the shock ;
But off the woods renewed their green,
Ere the tired head of Scotland's Queen
Reposed upon the block !

1817.

XXI

THE COMPLAINT

OF A FORSAKEN INDIAN WOMAN
[When a Northern Indian, from sickness, is un-
able to continue his journey with his com-

panions, he is left behind, covered over with
deer-skins, and is supplied with water, food,
and fuel, if the situation of the place will
afford it. He is informed of the track which
his companions intend to pursue, and if he
be unable to follow, or overtake them, he per-
ishes alone in the desert ; unless he should
have the good fortune to fall in with some other
tribes of Indians. The females are equally,
or still more, exposed to the same fate. See
that very interesting work HEARNE'S JOURNEY
from HUDSON'S BAY to the NORTHERN OCEAN.
In the high northern latitudes, as the same
writer informs us, when the northern lights
vary their position in the air, they make a
rustling and a crackling noise, as alluded to in
the following poem.]

BEFORE I see another day,
Oh let my body die away !
In sleep I heard the northern gleams ;
The stars, they were among my dreams :
In rustling conflict through the skies,
I heard, I saw the flashes drive,
And yet they are upon my eyes,
And yet I am alive ;
Before I see another day,
Oh let my body die away !

II

My fire is dead : it knew no pain ;
Yet is it dead, and I remain :
All stiff with ice the ashes lie ;
And they are dead, and I will die.
When I was well, I wished to live,
For clothes, for warmth, for food, and
fire ;
But they to me no joy can give,
No pleasure now, and no desire.
Then here contented will I lie !
Alone, I cannot fear to die.

III

Alas ! ye might have dragged me on
Another day, a single one !
Too soon I yielded to despair ;
Why did ye listen to my prayer ?
When ye were gone my limbs were
stronger ;
And oh, how grievously I rue,
That, afterwards, a little longer,
My friends, I did not follow you !
For strong and without pain I lay,
Dear friends, when ye were gone away.

IV

My child ! they gave thee to another,
A woman who was not thy mother.
When from my arms my Babe they took,
On me how strangely did he look !
Through his whole body something ran,
A most strange working did I see ;
—As if he strove to be a man,
That he might pull the sledge for me :
And then he stretched his arms, how
wild !
Oh mercy ! like a helpless child,

My little joy! my little pride!
In two days more I must have died.
Then do not weep and grieve for me;
I feel I must have died with thee.
O wind, that o'er my head art fiving
The way my friends their course did bend,
I should not feel the pain of dying,
Could I with thee a message send;
Too soon, my friends, ye went away;
For I had many things to say.

VI

I'll follow you across the snow;
Ye travel heavily and slow:
In spite of all my weary pain
I'll look upon your tents again.
—My fire is dead, and snowy white
The water which beside it stood:
The wolf has come to me to-night,
And he has stolen away my food.
For ever left alone am I;
Then wherefore should I fear to die?

VII

Young as I am, my course is run,
I shall not see another sun:
I cannot lift my limbs to know
If they have any life or no.
My poor forsaken child, if I
For once could have thee close to me,
With happy heart I then would die,
And my last thought would happy be;
But thou, dear Babe, art far away,
Nor shall I see another day.

1791.

XXII

THE LAST OF THE FLOCK

I

In distant countries have I been,
And yet I have not often seen
A healthy man, a man full grown,
Weep in the public roads, alone.
But such a one, on English ground,
And in the broad highway, I met:
Along the broad highway he came,
His cheeks with tears were wet:
Sturdy he seemed, though he was sad,
And in his arms a Lamb he had.

II

He saw me, and he turned aside,
As if he wished himself to hide:
And with his coat did then essay
To wipe those briny tears away.
I followed him, and said, "My friend,
What ails you? wherefore weep you
so?"
—"Shame on me, Sir! this lusty Lamb,
He makes my tears to flow.
To-day I fetched him from the rock;
He is the last of all my flock.

III

When I was young, a single man,
And after youthful follies ran,
Though little given to care and thought,
Yet, so it was, an ewe I bought;
And other sheep from her I raised,
As healthy sheep as you might see;
And then I married, and was rich
As I could wish to be:
Of sheep I numbered a full score,
And every year increased my store.

IV

Year after year my stock it grew;
And from this one, this single ewe,
Full fifty comely sheep I raised,
As fine a flock as ever grazed!
Upon the Quantock hills they fed;
They throve, and we at home did thrive
—This lusty Lamb of all my store
Is all that is alive;
And now I care not if we die,
And perish all of poverty.

V

Six Children, Sir! had I to feed;
Hard labour in a time of need!
My pride was tamed, and in our grief
I of the Parish asked relief.
They said, I was a wealthy man;
My sheep upon the uplands fed,
And it was fit that thence I took
Whereof to buy us bread.
"Do this: how can we give to you,"
They cried, "what to the poor is due?"

VI

I sold a sheep as they had said,
And bought my little children bread,
And they were healthy with their food;
For me—it never did me good.
A woeful time it was for me,
To see the end of all my gains,
The pretty flock which I had reared
With all my care and pains,
To see it melt like snow away—
For me it was a woeful day.

VII

Another still! and still another!
A little lamb, and then its mother!
It was a vein that never stopped—
Like blood-drops from my heart they
dropped.
Till thirty were not left alive
They dwindled, dwindled, one by one;
And I may say, that many a time
I wished they all were gone—
Reckless of what might come at last
Were but the bitter struggle past.

VIII

To wicked deeds I was inclined,
And wicked fancies crossed my mind;

And every man I chanced to see,
I thought he knew some ill of me:
No peace, no comfort could I find,
No ease, within doors or without;
And, crazily and wearily
I went my work about;
And oft was moved to flee from home,
And hide my head where wild beasts
roam.

IX

Sir! 'twas a precious flock to me,
As dear as my own children be;
For daily with my growing store
I loved my children more and more.
Alas! it was an evil time;
God cursed me in my sore distress;
I prayed, yet every day I thought
I loved my children less;
And every week, and every day,
My flock, it seemed to melt away.

X

They dwindled, Sir, sad sight to see!
From ten to five, from five to three,
A lamb, a wether, and a ewe;—
And then at last from three to two;
And, of my fifty, yesterday
I had but only one:
And here it lies upon my arm,
Alas! and I have none:—
To-day I fetched it from the rock;
It is the last of all my flock."

1798.

XXIII

REPENTANCE

A PASTORAL BALLAD

THE fields which with covetous spirit we
sold,
Those beautiful fields, the delight of the
day,
Would have brought us more good than
a burthen of gold,
Could we but have been as contented
as they.
When the troublesome Tempter beset
us, said I,
"Let him come, with his purse proudly
grasped in his hand;
But, Allan, be true to me, Allan,—
we'll die
Before he shall go with an inch of the
land!"

There dwelt we, as happy as birds in
their bowers;
Unfettered as bees that in gardens abide;
We could do what we liked with the
land, it was ours;
And for us the brook murmured that
ran by its side.

But now we are strangers, go early or
late;
And often, like one overburthened with
sin,
With my hand on the latch of the half-
opened gate,
I look at the fields, but I cannot go in!
When I walk by the hedge on a bright
summer's day,
Or sit in the shade of my grandfather's
tree,
A stern face it puts on, as if ready to say,
"What ails you, that you must come
creeping to me!"

With our pastures about us, we could
not be sad;
Our comfort was near if we ever were
lost;
But the comfort, the blessings, and
wealth that we had,
We slighted them all,—and our birth-
right was lost.

Oh, ill-judging sire of an innocent son
Who must now be a wanderer! but peace
to that strain!
Think of evening's repose when our
labour was done,
The sabbath's return; and its leisure's
soft chain!

And in sickness, if night had been sparing
of sleep,
How cheerful, at sunrise, the hill where
I stood,
Looking down on the kine, and our
treasure of sheep
That besprinkled the field; 'twas like
youth in my blood!

Now I cleave to the house, and am dull
as a snail;
And, oftentimes, hear the church-bell
with a sigh,
That follows the thought—We've no
land in the vale,
Save six feet of earth where our fore-
fathers lie!

1804.

XXIV

THE AFFLICTION OF
MARGARET

I

WHERE art thou, my beloved Son,
Where art thou, worse to me than dead!
Oh find me, prosperous or undone!
Or, if the grave be now thy bed,
Why am I ignorant of the same
That I may rest; and neither blame
Nor sorrow may attend thy name?

II

Seven years, alas ! to have received
No tidings of an only child ;
To have despaired, have hoped, believed,
And been for evermore beguiled ;
Sometimes with thoughts of very bliss !
I catch at them, and then I miss ;
Was ever darkness like to this ?

III

He was among the prime in worth,
An object beauteous to behold ;
Well born, well bred ; I sent him forth
Ingenuous, innocent and bold :
If things ensued that wanted grace,
As hath been said, they were not base ;
And never blush was on my face.

IV

Ah ! little doth the young-one dream,
When full of play and childish cares,
What power is in his wildest scream,
Heard by his mother's unawares !
He knows it not, he cannot guess :
Years to a mother bring distress,
But do not make her love the less.

V

Neglect me ! no, I suffered long
From that ill thought ; and, being blind,
Said, " Pride shall help me in my wrong
Kind mother have I been, as kind
As ever breathed ; " and that is true ;
I've wet my path with tears like dew,
Weeping for him when no one knew.

VI

My Son, if thou be humbled, poor,
Hopeless of honour and of gain,
Oh ! do not dread thy mother's door ;
Think not of me with grief and pain :
I now can see with better eyes ;
And worldly grandeur I despise,
And fortune with her gifts and lies.

VII

Alas ! the fowls of heaven have wings,
And blasts of heaven will aid their flight
They mount—how short a voyage brings
The wanderers back to their delight !
Chains tie us down by land and sea ;
And wishes, vain as mine may be,
All that is left to comfort thee.

VIII

Perhaps some dungeon hears thee groan,
Maimed, mangled by inhuman men ;
Or thou upon a desert thrown
Inferiorest the lion's den ;
Or hast been summoned to the deep,
Thou, thou and all thy mates, to keep
An incommunicable sleep.

IX

I look for ghosts ; but none will force
Their way to me : 'tis falsely said
That there was ever intercourse
Between the living and the dead ;
For, surely, then I should have sight
Of him I wait for day and night,
With love and longings infinite.

X

My apprehensions come in crowds ;
I dread the rustling of the grass ;
The very shadows of the clouds
Have power to shake me as they pass :
I question things and do not find
One that will answer to my mind ;
And all the world appears unkind.

XI

Beyond participation lie
My troubles, and beyond relief :
If any chance to heave a sigh,
They pity me, and not my grief.
Then come to me, my son, or send
Some tidings that my woes may end ;
I have no other earthly friend !

1804.

XXV

THE COTTAGER TO HER
INFANT

BY MY SISTER

THE days are cold, the nights are long,
The north-wind sings a doleful song ;
Then hush again upon my breast ;
All merry things are now at rest,
Save thee, my pretty Love !

The kitten sleeps upon the hearth,
The crickets long have ceased their
mirth ;

There's nothing stirring in the house
Save one wee, hungry, rattling mouse,
Then why so busy thou ?

Nay ! start not at that sparkling light ;
'Tis but the moon that shines so bright
On the window pane bedropped with
rain :

Then, little Darling ! sleep again,
And wake when it is day.

1805.

XXVI

MATERNAL GRIEF

DEPARTED Child ! I could forget thee once,
Though at my bosom nursed ; this woeful
gain

Thy dissolution brings, that in my soul
Is present and perpetually abides
A shadow, never, never to be displaced
By the returning substance, seen or
touched,

Seen by mine eyes, or clasped in my embrace.

Absence and death how differ they! and how

Shall I admit that nothing can restore
What one short sigh so easily removed?—
Death, life, and sleep, reality and thought,
Assist me, God, their boundaries to know,
O teach me calm submission to thy Will!

The Child she mourned had overstepped the pale
Of Infancy, but still did breathe the air
That sanctifies its confines, and partook
Reflected beams of that celestial light
To all the Little-ones on sinful earth
Not unvouchsafed—a light that warmed
and cheered

Those several qualities of heart and mind
Which, in her own blest nature, rooted
deep,

Daily before the Mother's watchful eye,
And not hers only, their peculiar charms
Unfolded,—beauty, for its present self,
And for its promises to future years,
With not unfrequent rapture fondly
hailed.

Have you espied upon a dewy lawn
A pair of Leverets each provoking each
To a continuance of their fearless sport,
Two separate Creatures in their several
gifts

Abounding, but so fashioned that, in all
That Nature prompts them to display,
their looks,

Their starts of motion and their fits of
rest,

An undistinguishable style appears
And character of gladness, as if Spring
Lodged in their innocent bosoms, and the
spirit

Of the rejoicing morning were their own.

Such union, in the lovely Girl maintained

And her twin Brother, had the parent
seen,

Ere, pouncing like a ravenous bird of prey,
Death in a moment parted them, and left
The Mother, in her turns of anguish,
worse

Than desolate; for oft-times from the
sound

Of the survivor's sweetest voice (dear
child,

He knew it not) and from his happiest
looks,

Did she extract the food of self-reproach,
As one that lived ungrateful for the stay
By heaven afforded to uphold her maimed
And tottering spirit. And full oft the Boy,
Now first acquainted with distress and
grief,

Shrunk from his Mother's presence,
shunned with fear

Her sad approach, and stole away to find
In his known haunts of joy where'er he
might,

A more congenial object. But, as time
Softened her pangs and reconciled the
child

To what he saw, he gradually returned,
Like a scared Bird encouraged to renew
A broken intercourse; and, while his eyes
Were yet with pensive fear and gentle awe
Turned upon her who bore him, she
would stoop

To imprint a kiss that lacked not power
to spread

Faint colour over both their pallid cheeks,
And stilled his tremulous lip. Thus they
were calmed

And Cheered; and now together breathe
fresh air

In open fields; and when the glare of day
Is gone, and twilight to the Mother's wish
Beinends the observance, readily they
join

In walks whose boundary is the lost
One's grave,

Which he with flowers hath planted,
finding there

Amusement, where the Mother does not
miss

Dear consolation, kneeling on the turf
In prayer, yet blending with that solemn
rite

Of pious faith the vanities of grief;
For such, by pitying Angels and by
Spirits

Transferred to regions upon which the
clouds

Of our weak nature rest not, must be
deemed

Those willing tears, and unforbidden
sighs,

And all those tokens of a cherished
sorrow,

Which, soothed and sweetened by the
grace of Heaven

As now it is, seems to her own fond heart,
Immortal as the love that gave it being.

XXVII

THE SAILOR'S MOTHER

ONE morning (raw it was and wet—
A foggy day in winter time)

A Woman on the road I met,
Not old, though something past her
prime:

Majestic in her person, tall and
straight;

And like a Roman matron's was her
mien and gait.

The ancient spirit is not dead ;
Old times, thought I, are breathing
there ;

Proud was I that my country bred
Such strength, a dignity so fair :
She begged an alms, like one in poor
estate ;

I looked at her again, nor did my pride
abate.

When from these lofty thoughts I
woke,

"What is it," said I, "that you bear,
Beneath the covert of your Cloak,
Protected from this cold damp air ?"
She answered, soon as she the question
heard,

"A simple burthen, Sir, a little Singing-
bird."

And, thus continuing, she said,

"I had a Son, who many a day
Sailed on the seas, but he is dead ;
In Denmark he was cast away :
And I have travelled weary miles
to see

If aught which he had owned might
still remain for me."

The bird and cage they both were his :
'Twas my Son's bird ; and neat and
trim

He kept it : many voyages
The singing-bird had gone with him ;
When last he sailed, he left the bird
behind ;

From bodings, as might be, that hung
upon his mind.

He to a fellow-lodger's care
Had left it, to be watched and fed,
And pipe its song in safety :—there
I found it when my Son was dead ;
And now, God help me for my little
wit !

I bear it with me, Sir ;—he took so much
delight in it."

1800.

XXVIII

THE CHILDLESS FATHER

"Up, Timothy, up with your staff and
away !

Not a soul in the village this morning
will stay ;

The hare has just started from Hamil-
ton's grounds,

And Skiddaw is glad with the cry of the
hounds."

—Of coats and of jackets grey, scarlet,
and green,

On the slopes of the pastures all colours
were seen ;

With their comely blue aprons, and caps
white as snow,

The girls on the hills made a holiday
[show.]

Fresh sprigs of green box-wood, not
six months before,

Filled the funeral basin¹ at Timothy's
door ;

A coffin through Timothy's threshold
had past ;

One Child did it bear, and that Child
was his last.

Now fast up the dell came the noise and
the fray,

The horse and the horn, and the hark !
hark away !

Old Timothy took up his staff, and he
shut

With a leisurely motion the door of his
hut.

Perhaps to himself at that moment he
said ;

"The key I must take, for my Ellen is
dead."

But of this in my ears not a word did he
speak ;

And he went to the chase with a tear on
his cheek.

1800.

XXIX

THE EMIGRANT MOTHER

ONCE in a lonely hamlet I sojourned
In which a Lady driven from France
did dwell ;

The big and lesser griefs with which she
mourned,

In friendship she to me would often tell.

This Lady, dwelling upon British ground,
Where she was childless, daily would
repair

To a poor neighbouring cottage ; as I
found,

For sake of a young Child whose
home was there.

Once having seen her clasp with fond
embrace

This Child, I chanted to myself a lay,
Endeavouring, in our English tongue,
to trace

Such things as she unto the Babe might
say :

And thus, from what I heard and knew,
or guessed,

My song the workings of her heart
expressed.

1 In several parts of the North of England,
when a funeral takes place, a basin full of sprigs
of box-wood is placed at the door of the house
from which the coffin is taken up, and each per-
son who attends the funeral ordinarily takes a
sprig of this box-wood, and throws it into the
grave of the deceased.

.H.

I

"Dear Babe, thou daughter of another.
One moment let me be thy mother !
An infant's face and looks are thine
And sure a mother's heart is mine :
Thy own dear mother's far away,
At labour in the harvest field :
Thy little sister is at play ;—
What warmth, what comfort would it
yield
To my poor heart, if thou wouldst be
One little hour a child to me !

II

Across the waters I am come,
And I have left a babe at home :
A long, long way of land and sea !
Come to me—I'm no ennuï :
I am the same who at thy side
Sate yesterday, and made a nest
For thee, sweet Baby !—thou hast tried,
Thou know'st the pillow of my breast ;
Good, good art thou :—alas ! to me
Far more than I can be to thee.

III

Here, little Darling, dost thou lie ;
An infant thou, a mother I !
Mine wilt thou be, thou hast no fears ;
Mine art thou—spite of these my tears.
Alas ! before I left the spot,
My baby and its dwelling-place :
The nurse said to me, 'Tears should not
Be shed upon an infant's face,
It was unlucky'—no, no, no ;
No truth is in them who say so !

IV

My own dear Little-one will sigh,
Sweet Babe ! and they will let him die.
'He pines,' they'll say, 'it is his doom,
And you may see his hour is come.'
Oh ! had he but thy cheerful smiles,
Limbs stout as thine, and lips as gay,
Thy looks, thy cunning, and thy wiles,
And countenance like a summer's day,
They would have hopes of him ;—and
then
I should behold his face again !

V

'Tis gone—like dreams that we forget ;
There was a smile or two—yet—yet
I can remember them, I see
The smiles, worth all the world to me.
Dear Baby ! I must lay thee down :
Thou troublest me with strange alarms ;
Smiles hast thou, bright ones of thy own ;
I cannot keep thee in my arms ;
For they confound me ;—where—where
is
That last, that sweetest smile of his ?

VI

Oh ! how I love thee !—we will stay
Together here this one half day.
My sister's child, who bears my name,
From France to sheltering England
came ;
She with her mother crossed the sea ;
The babe and mother near me dwell :
Yet does my yearning heart to thee
Turn rather, though I love her well :
Rest, little stranger, rest thee here !
Never was any child more dear !

VII

—I cannot help it ; ill intent
I've none, my pretty Innocent !
I weep—I know they do thee wrong,
These tears—and my poor idle tongue.
Oh, what a kiss was that ! my cheek
How cold it is ! but thou art good ;
Thine eyes are on me—they would speak,
I think, to help me if they could.
Blessings upon that soft, warm face,
My heart again is in its place !

VIII

While thou art mine, my little Love,
This cannot be a sorrowful grove ;
Contentment, hope, and mother's glee,
I seem to find them all in thee :
Here's grass to play with, here are
flowers ;
I'll call thee by my darling's name ;
Thou hast, I think, a look of ours,
Thy features seem to me the same ;
His little sister thou shalt be ;
And, when once more my home I see,
I'll tell him many tales of Thee."

1802.

XXX

VAUDRACOUR AND JULIA

The following tale was written as an Episode,
in a work from which its length may perhaps
exclude it. The facts are true ; no invention,
as to these has been exercised, as none was
needed.

O HAPPY time of youthful lovers (thus
My story may begin) O balmy time,
In which a love-knot on a lady's brow
Is fairer than the fairest star in heaven !
To such inheritance of blessed fancy
(Fancy that sports more desperately
with minds
Than ever fortune hath been known to
do) "
The high-born Vaudracour was brought,
by years
Whose progress had a little overstepped
His stripling prime. A town of small
repute.
Among the vine-clad mountains of Au-
vergne,

Was the Youth's birth-place. There
 he wooed a Maid
 Who heard the heart-felt music of his suit
 With answering vows. Plebeian was
 the stock,
 Plebeian, though ingenuous, the stock,
 From which her graces and her honours
 sprung:
 And hence the father of the enamoured
 Youth,
 With haughty indignation, spurned the
 thought
 Of such alliance.—From their cradles up,
 With but a step between their several
 homes,
 Twins had they been in pleasure: after
 strife
 And petty quarrels, had grown fond
 again;
 Each other's advocate, each other's stay:
 And, in their happiest moments, not
 content,
 If more divided than a sportive pair
 Of sea-fowl, conscious both that they are
 hovering
 Within the eddy of a common blast,
 Or hidden only by the concave depth
 Of neighbouring billows from each other's
 sight.

Thus, not without concurrence of
 an age
 Unknown to memory, was an earnest
 given
 By ready nature for a life of love,
 For endless constancy, and placid truth;
 But whatsoever of such rare treasure lay
 Reserved, had fate permitted, for sup-
 port
 Of their maturer years, his present mind
 Was under fascination;—he beheld
 A vision, and adored the thing he saw.
 Arabian fiction never filled the world
 With half the wonders that were wrought
 for him.
 Earth breathed in one great presence
 of the spring;
 Life turned the meanest of her imple-
 ments,
 Before his eyes, to price above all gold;
 The house she dwelt in was a sainted
 shrine;
 Her chamber-window did surpass in
 glory
 The portals of the dawn; all paradise
 Could, by the simple opening of a door,
 Let itself in upon him:—pathways,
 walks,
 Swarmed with enchantment, till his
 spirit sank,
 Surcharged, within him, overblest to
 move,
 Beneath a sun that wakes a weary world

To its dull round of ordinary cares;
 A man too happy for mortality!

So passed the time, till whether through
 effect
 Of some unguarded moment that dis-
 solved
 Virtuous restraint—ah, speak it, think
 it, not!
 Deem rather that the fervent Youth,
 who saw
 So many bars between his present state
 And the dear haven where he wished to
 be
 In honourable wedlock with his Love,
 Was in his judgment tempted to decline
 To perilous weakness, and entrust his
 cause
 To nature for a happy end of all;
 Deem that by such fond hope the Youth
 was swayed,
 And bear with their transgression, when
 I add
 That Julia, wanting yet the name of
 wife,
 Carried about her for a secret grief
 The promise of a mother.

To conceal
 The threatened shame, the parents of
 the Maid
 Found means to hurry her away by
 night,
 And unforewarned, that in some distant
 spot
 She might remain shrouded in privacy,
 Until the babe was born. When morn-
 ing came,
 The Lover, thus bereft, stung with his
 loss, [turn,
 And all uncertain whither he should
 Chafed like a wild beast in the toils; but
 soon
 Discovering traces of the fugitives,
 Their steps he followed to the Maid's
 retreat.
 Easily may the sequel be divined—
 Walks to and fro—watchings at every
 hour:
 And the fair Captive, who, when'er she
 may,
 Is busy at her casement as the swallow
 Fluttering its pinions, almost within
 reach,
 About the pendent nest, did thus espy
 Her Lover!—thence a stolen interview,
 Accomplished under friendly shade of
 night.

I pass the raptures of the pair;—such
 theme
 Is, by innumerable poets, touched
 In more delightful verse than skill of
 mine

Could fashion : chiefly by that darling
bard

Who told of Juliet and her Romeo,
And of the lark's note heard before its
time,

And of the streaks that laced the severing
clouds

In the unrelenting east.—Through all her
courts

The vacant city slept : the busy winds,
That keep no certain intervals of rest,

Moved not : meanwhile the galaxy dis-
played

Her fires, that like mysterious pulses beat
Aloft ;—momentous but uneasy bliss !

To their full hearts the universe seemed
hung

On that brief meeting's slender filament !

They parted ; and the generous
Vaudracour

Reached speedily the native threshold,
bent

On making (so the Lovers had agreed)
A sacrifice of birthright to attain

A final portion from his father's hand ;
Which granted, Bride and Bridegroom

then would flee
To some remote and solitary place,

Shady as night, and beautiful as heaven,
Where they may live, with no one to be-
hold

Their happiness, or to disturb their love.
But now of this no whisper ; not the less,

If ever an obtrusive word were dropped
Touching the matter of his passion, still,

In his stern father's hearing, Vaudra-
cour

Persisted openly that death alone
Should abrogate his human privilege

Divine, of swearing everlasting truth,
Upon the altar, to the Maid he loved. "

" You shall be baffled in your mad
intent

If there be justice in the court of France,"
Muttered the Father.—From these

words the Youth
Conceived a terror ; and, by night or

day,
Stirred nowhere without weapons, that

full soon
Found dreadful provocation : for at night

When to his chamber he retired, attempt
Was made to seize him by three armed

men,
Acting, in furtherance of the father's will,

Under a private signet of the State.
One the rash Youth's ungovernable

hand
Slew, and as quickly to a second gave

A perilous wound—he shuddered to be-
hold

The breathless corse ; then peacefully

His person to the law, was lodged in
prison,

And wore the fetters of a criminal.

Have you observed a tuft of winged
seed

That, from the dandelion's naked stalk,
Mounted aloft, is suffered not to use

Its natural gifts for purposes of rest,
Driven by the autumnal whirlwind to

and fro
Through the wide element ? or have you

marked
The heavier substance of a leaf-clad

bough,
Within the vortex of a foaming flood,

Tormented ? by such aid you may con-
ceive

The perturbation that ensued ;—ah,
no !

Desperate the Maid—the Youth is staid
with blood ;

Unmatchable on earth is their disquiet !
Yet as the troubled seed and tortured

bough
Is Mah, subjected to despotic sway.

For him, by private influence with the
Court,

Was pardon gained, and liberty pro-
cured :

But not without exaction of a pledge,
Which liberty and love dispersed in air.

He flew to her from whom they would
divide him—

He clove to her who could not give him
peace—

Yea, his first word of greeting was,—
" All right

Is gone from me ; my lately-towering
hopes,

To the least fibre of their lowest root,
Are withered ; thou no longer canst be

mine,
I thine—the conscience-stricken must not

woo
The unruffled Innocent,—I see thy face,

Behold thee, and my misery is complete ! "

" One, are we not ? " exclaimed the
Maiden—" One,

For innocence and youth, for weal and
woe ? "

Then with the father's name she coupled
words

Of vehement indignation ; but the Youth
Checked her with filial meekness ; for no

thought
Uncharitable crossed his mind, no sense

Of hasty anger rising in the eclipse
Of true domestic loyalty did e'er

Find place within his bosom.—Once
again

The persevering wedge of tyranny

Achieved their separation; and once
more

Were they united,—to be yet again
Disparted, pitiable lot! But here
A portion of the tale may well be left
In silence, though my memory could add
Much how the Youth, in scanty space of
time,

Was traversed from without; much, too,
of thoughts

That occupied his days in solitude
Under privation and restraint; and
what,

Through dark and shapeless fear of things
to come,

And what, through strong compunction
for the past,

He suffered,—breaking down in heart
and mind!

Doomed to a third and last captivity,
His freedom he recovered on the eve
Of Julia's travail. When the babe was
born,

Its presence tempted him to cherish
schemes

Of future happiness. "You shall return,
Julia," said he, "and to your father's
house

Go with the child.—You have been
wretched; yet

* The silver shower, whose reckless burthen
weighs

Too heavily upon the lily's head,
Oft leaves a saving moisture at its root.

Malice, beholding you, will melt away.
Go!—'tis a town where both of us were
born;

None will reproach you, for our truth is
known;

And if, amid those once-bright bowers,
our fate

Remain unpitied, pity is not in man.
With ornaments—the prettiest, nature
yields

Or art can fashion, shall you deck our
boy,

And feed his countenance with your own
sweet looks

Till no one can resist him.—Now, even
now,

I see him sporting on the sunny lawn;
My father from the window sees him
too;

Startled, as if some new-created thing
Enriched the earth, or Faery of the woods
Bounded before him;—but the unweet-
ing Child

Shall by his beauty win his grandsire's
heart

So that it shall be softened, and our
loves

End happily, as they began!

These gleams
Appeared but seldom; oftener was he
seen

Propping a pale and melancholy face
Upon the Mother's Bosom; resting thus

His head upon one breast, while from
the other

The Babe was drawing in its quiet food.
—That pillow is no longer to be thine,
Fond Youth! that mournful solace now

must pass
Into the list of things that cannot be!

Unwedded Julia, terror-smitten, hears
The sentence, by her mother's lip pro-
nounced,

That dooms her to a convent.—Who
shall tell,

Who dares report, the tidings to the lord
Of her affections? so they blindly asked
Who knew not to what quiet depths a
weight

Of agony had pressed the Sufferer down:
The word, by others dreaded, he can
hear

Composed and silent, without visible sign
Of even the least emotion. Noting this,
When the impatient object of his love
Upbraided him with slackness, he re-
turned

No answer, only took the mother's hand
And kissed it; seemingly devoid of pain,
Or care, that what so tenderly he pressed,
Was a dependant on the obdurate heart

Of one who came to disunite their lives
For ever—sad alternative! preferred,
By the unbending Parents of the Maid,
To secret 'spousals meanly disavowed.

—So be it!

In the city he remained
A season after Julia had withdrawn

To those religious walls. He, too, de-
parts—

Who with him?—even the senseless
Little-one.

With that sole charge he passed the
city gates,

For the last time, attendant by the side
Of a close chair, a litter, or sedan.

In which the Babe was carried. To a
hill,

That rose a brief league distant from the
The dwellers in that house where he had
lodged

Accompanied his steps, by anxious love
Impelled;—they parted from him there,
and stood

Watching below till he had disappeared
On the hill top. His eyes he scarcely
took,

Throughout that journey, from the
vehicle

(Slow-moving ark of all his hopes!)
that veiled

The tender infant : and at every inn,
And under every hospitable tree
At which the bearers halted or reposed,
Laid him with timid care upon his
knees,
And looked, as mothers ne'er were known
to look,
Upon the nursing which his arms em-
braced.

This was the manner in which Vaud-
racour
Departed with his infant ; and thus
reached
His father's house, where to the innocent
child
Admittance was denied. The young
man spake
No word of indignation or reproof,
But of his father begged, a last re-
quest,

That a retreat might be assigned to him
Where in forgotten quiet he might dwell,
With such allowance as his wants re-
quired ;

For wishes he had none. To a lodge
that stood
Deep in a forest, with leave given, at the
age

Of four-and-twenty summers he with-
drew ;

And thither took with him his mother-
less Babe,

And one domestic for their common needs,
An aged woman. It consoled him here
To attend upon the orphan, and perform
Obsequious service to the precious
child,

Which, after a short time, by some mistake
Or indiscretion of the Father, died.—

The Tale I follow to its last recess
Of suffering or of peace, I know not
which :

Theirs be the blame who caused the woe,
not mine !

From this time forth he never shared
a snail

With mortal creature. An Inhabitant
Of that same town, in which the pair
had left

So lively a remembrance of their griefs,
By chance of business, coming within
reach

Of his retirement, to the forest lodge
Repaired, but only found the matron
there,

Who told him that his pains were thrown
away,

For that her Master never uttered word
To living thing—not even to her.—
Behold !

While they were speaking, Vaudracour
approached ;

But, seeing some one near, as on the
latch

Of the garden-gate his hand was laid,
he shrunk—

And, like a shadow, glided off of view.
Shocked at his savage aspect, from the
place

The visitor retired.

Thus lived the Youth
Cut off from all intelligence with man,
And shunning even the light of common
day ;

Nor could the voice of Freedom, which
through France

Full speedily resounded, public hope,
Or personal memory of his own deep
wrongs,

Rouse him : but in those solitary
shades

His days he wasted, an imbecile mind !
1805.

XXXI

THE IDIOT BOY

'Tis eight o'clock,—a clear March night,
The moon is up,—the sky is blue,
The owl, in the moonlight air,
Shouts from nobody knows where ;
He lengthens out is lonely shout,
Halloo ! halloo ! a long halloo !

—Why bustle thus about your door,
What means this bustle, Betty Foy ?
Why are you in this mighty fret ?
And why on horseback have you set
Him whom you love, your Idiot Boy ?

Scarcely a soul is out of bed ;
Good Betty, put him down again ;
His lips with joy they burr at you ;
But, Betty ! what has he to do
With stirrup, saddle, or with rein ?

But Betty's bent on her intent ;
For her good neighbour, Susan Gale,
Old Susan, she who dwells alone,
Is sick, and makes a piteous moan,
As if her very life would fail.

There's not a house within a mile,
No hand to help them in distress ;
Old Susan lies a-bed in pain,
And sorely puzzled are the twain,
For what she ails they cannot guess.

And Betty's husband's at the wood,
Where by the week he doth abide,
A woodman in the distant vale ;
There's none to help poor Susan Gale ;
What must be done ? what will betide ?

And Betty from the lane has fetched
Her Pony, that is mild and good :
Whether he be in joy or pain,
Feeding at will along the lane,
Or bringing faggots from the wood.

And he is all in travelling trim,—
And, by the moonlight, Betty Boy
Has on the well-girt saddle set
(The like was never heard of yet)
Hip whom she loves, her Idiot Boy.

And he must post without delay
Across the bridge and through the dale,
And by the church, and o'er the down,
To bring a Doctor from the town,
Or she will die, old Susan Gale.

There is no need of boot or spur,
There is no need of whip or wand;
For Johnny has his holly-bough,
And with a hurly-burly now
He shakes the green bough in his hand.

And Betty o'er and o'er has told
The Boy, who is her best delight,
Both what to follow, what to shun,
What do, and what to leave undone,
How turn to left, and how to right.

And Betty's most especial charge,
Was, "Johnny! Johnny! mind that
you
Come home again, nor stop at all,—
Come home again, what'er befall,
My Johnny, do, I pray you do!"

To this did Johnny answer make.
Both with his head and with his hand,
And proudly shook the bridle too;
And then! his words were not a few,
Which Betty well could understand.

And now that Johnny is just going,
Though Betty's in a mighty flurry,
She gently pats the Pony's side,
On which her Idiot Boy must ride,
And seems no longer in a hurry.

But when the Pony moved his legs,
Oh! then for the poor Idiot Boy!
For joy he cannot hold the bridle,
For joy his head and heels are idle,
He's idle all for very joy.

And while the Pony moves his legs,
In Johnny's left hand you may see
The green bough motionless and dead:
The Moon that shines above his head
Is not more still and mute than he.

His heart it was so full of glee,
That till full fifty yards were gone,
He quite forgot his holly whig,
And all his skill in horsemanship:
Oh! happy, happy, happy John.

And while the Mother, at the door,
Stands fixed, her face with joy o'erflows,
Proud of herself, and proud of him,
She sees him in his travelling trim,
How quietly her Johnny goes.

The silence of her Idiot Boy,
What hopes it sends to Betty's heart!
He's at the guide-post—he turns right;
She watches till he's out of sight,
And Betty will not then depart.

Burr, burr—now Johnny's lips they burr,
As loud as any mill, or near it;
Meek as a lamb the Pony moves,
And Johnny makes the noise he loves,
And Betty listens, glad to hear it.

Away she hies to Susan Gale:
Her Messenger's in merry tune;
The owlets hoot, the owlets curr,
And Johnny's lips they burr, burr, burr,
As on he goes beneath the moon.

His steed and he right well agree;
For of this Pony there's a rumour,
That, should he lose his eyes and ears,
And should he live a thousand years,
He never will be out of humour.

But then he is a horse that thinks!
And when he thinks, his pace is slack;
Now, though he knows poor Johnny well,
Yet, for his life, he cannot tell
What he has got upon his back.

So through the moonlight lanes they go,
And far into the moonlight dale,
And by the church, and o'er the down,
To bring a Doctor from the town,
To comfort poor old Susan Gale.

And Betty, now at Susan's side,
Is in the middle of her story,
What speedy help her Boy will bring,
With many a most diverting thing,
Of Johnny's wit, and Johnny's glory.

And Betty, still at Susan's side,
By this time is not quite so flurried:
Penure with porringer and plate
She sits, as if in Susan's fate
Her life and soul were buried.

But Betty, poor good woman! she,
You plainly in her face may read it,
Could lend out of that moment's store
Five years of happiness or more
To any that might need it.

But yet I guess that now and then
With Betty all was not so well;
And to the road she turns her ears,
And thence full many a sound she hears,
Which she to Susan will not tell.

Poor Susan moans, poor Susan groans:
"As sure as there's a moon in heaven,"
Cries Betty, "he'll be back again;
They'll both be here—'tis almost ten—
Both will be here before eleven."

Poor Susan moans, poor Susan groans;
The clock gives warning for eleven;

'Tis on the stroke—"He must be near,"
Quoth Betty, "and will soon be here,
As sure as there's a moon in heaven."

The clock is on the stroke of twelve,
And Johnny is not yet in sight :
—The Moon's in heaven, as Betty sees,
But Betty is not quite at ease ;
And Susan has a dreadful night.

And Betty, half an hour ago,
On Johnny vile reflections cast :
"A little idle sauntering Thing !"
With other names, an endless string ;
But now that time is gone and past.

And Betty's drooping at the heart,
That happy time all past and gone,
"How can it be he is so late ?

The Doctor, he has made him wait ;
Susan ! they'll both be here anon."

And Susan's growing worse and worse,
And Betty's in a sad *quandary* ;
And then there's nobody to say
If she must go, or she must stay !
—She's in a sad *quandary*.

The clock is on the stroke of one ;
But neither Doctor nor his Guide
Appears along the moonlight road ;
There's neither horse nor man abroad,
And Betty's still at Susan's side.

And Susan now begins to fear
Of sad mischances not a few,
That Johnny may perhaps be drowned ;
Or lost, perhaps, and never found ;
Which they must both for ever rue.

She prefaced half a hint of this
With, "God forbid it should be true !"
At the first word that Susan said
Cried Betty, rising from the bed,
"Susan, I'd gladly stay with you."

I must be gone, I must away :
Consider, Johnny's but half-wise ;
Susan, we must take care of him,
If he is hurt in life or limb"—
"Oh God forbid !" poor Susan cries.
"What can I do ?" says Betty, going.
"What can I do to ease your pain ?"
Good Susan tell me, and I'll stay ;
I fear you're in a dreadful way,
But I shall soon be back again."

"Nay, Betty, go ! good Betty, go !
There's nothing that can ease my pain."
Then off she hies ; but with a prayer
That God poor Susan's life would spare,
Till she comes back again.

So, through the moonlight lane she goes,
And far into the moonlight dale ;
And how she ran, and how she walked,
And all that to herself she talked,
Would surely be a tedious tale.

In high and low, above, below,
If great and small, in round and square,
In tree and tower was Johnny seen,
In bush and brake, in black and green ;
'Twas Johnny, Johnny, everywhere.

And while she crossed the bridge, there
came

A thought with which her heart is sore—
Johnny perhaps his horse forsook,
To hunt the moon within the brook,
And never will be heard of more.

Now is she high upon the dawn,
Alone amid a prospect wide ;
There's neither Johnny nor his Horse
Among the fern or in the gorse ;
There's neither Doctor nor his Guide.

"Oh saints ! what is become of him ?
Perhaps he's climbed into an oak,
Where he will stay till he is dead ;
Or, sadly he has been misled,
And joined the wandering gipsy-folk.

Or him that wicked Pony's carried
To the dark cave, the goblin's hall ;
Or in the castle he's pursuing
Among the ghosts his own undoing ;
Or playing with the waterfall."

At poor old Susan then she tailed,
While to the town she posts away ;
"If Susan had not been so ill,
Alas ! I should have had him still,
My Johnny, till my dying day."
Poor Betty, in this sad distemper,
The Doctor's self could hardly spare :
Unworthy things she talked, and wild ;
Even he, of cattle the most mild,
The Pony had his share.

But now she's fairly in the town,
And to the Doctor's door she hies ;
'Tis silence all on every side ;
The town so long, the town so wide,
Is silent as the skies.

And now she's at the Doctor's door,
She lifts the knocker, rap, rap, rap :
The Doctor at the casement shows
His glimmering eyes that peep and doze !
And one hand rubs his old night-cap.

"Oh Doctor ! Doctor ! where's my
Johnny ?"

"I'm here, what is't you want with me ?"
"Oh Sir ! you know I'm Betty Foy,
And I have lost my poor dear Boy,
You know him—him you often see ;
He's not so wise as some folks be."
"The devil take his wisdom !" said
The Doctor, looking somewhat grim,
"What, Woman ! should I know of
him ?"

And, grumbling, he went back to bed !

"O woe is me! O woe is me!
Here will I die; here will I dig;
I thought to find my lost one here,
But he is neither far nor near,
Oh! what a wretched Mother I!"

She stops, she stands, she looks about;
Which way to turn she cannot tell.
Poor Betty! it would ease her pain
If she had heart to knock again;
—The clock strikes three—a dismal
knell!

Then up along the town she hies,
No wonder if her senses fail;
This piteous news so much it shocked
her,
She quite forgot to send the Doctor,
To comfort poor old Susan Gate.

And now she's high upon the down,
And she can see a mile of road:
"O cruel! I'm almost threescore;
Such night as this was ne'er before,
There's not a single soul abroad."

She listens, but she cannot hear
The foot of horse, the voice of man;
The streams with softest sound are
flowing,
The grass you almost hear it growing,
You hear it now, if e'er you can.

The owlets through the long blue night
Are shouting to each other still:
Fond lovers! yet not quite hob nob,
They lengthen out the tremulous sob,
That echoes far from hill to hill.

Poor Betty now has lost all hope,
Her thoughts are bent on deadly sin,
A green-grown pond she just has past,
And from the brink she hurries fast,
Lest she should drown herself therein.

And now she sits her down and weeps;
Such tears she never shed before;
"Oh dear, dear Pony! my sweet joy!
Oh carry back my Idiot Boy!
And we will ne'er o'erload thee more."

A thought is come into her head:
The Pony he is mild and good,
And we have always used him well;
Perhaps he's gone along the dell,
And carried Johnny to the wood.

Then up she springs as if on wings;
She thinks no more of deadly sin;
"If Betty fifty ponds should see,"
The last of all her thoughts would be
To drown herself therein.

O Reader! now that I might tell
What Johnny and his Horse are doing!
What they've been doing all this time,
Oh could I put it into rhyme,
A most delightful tale pursuing!

Perhaps, and no unlikely thought!
He with his Pony now doth roam
The cliffs and peaks so high that are,
To lay his hands upon a star,
And in his pocket bring it home.

Perhaps he's turned himself about,
His face unto his horse's tail,
And, still and mute, in wonder lost,
All silent as a horseman-ghost,
He travels slowly down the vale.

And now, perhaps, is hunting sheep,
A fierce and dreadful hunter he;
Yon valley, now so trim and green,
In five months' time, should he be seen,
A desert wilderness will be!

Perhaps, with head and heels on fire,
And like the very soul of evil,
He's galloping away, away,
And so will gallop on for aye,
The bane of all that dread the devil!

I to the Muses have been bound
These fourteen years, by strong inden-
tures:

O gentle Muses! let me tell
But half of what to him befel;
He surely met with strange adventures.

O gentle Muses! is this kind?
Why will ye thus my suit repel?
Why of your further aid bereave me?
And can ye thus unfriended leave me;
Ye Muses! whom I love so well?

Who's yon, that, near the waterfall,
Which thunders down with headlong
force,

Beneath the moon, yet shining fair,
As careless as if nothing were,
Sits upright on a feeding horse?

Unto his horse—there feeding free,
He seems, I think, the rein to give;
Of moon or stars he takes no heed;
Of such we in romances read:
—'Tis Johnny! Johnny! as I live.

And that's the very Pony, too!
Where is she, where is Betty Foy?
She hardly can sustain her fears;
The roaring waterfall she hears,
And cannot find her Idiot Boy.

Your Pony's worth his weight in gold!
Then calm your terrors, Betty Foy!
She's coming from among the trees,
And now all full in view she sees
Him whom she loves, her Idiot Boy.

And Betty sees the Pony too:
Why stand you thus, good Betty Foy?
It is no goblin, 'tis no ghost,
'Tis he whom you so long have lost,
He whom you love, your Idiot Boy,

She looks again—her arms are up—
She screams—she cannot move for joy;
She darts, as with a torrent's force,
She almost has o'turned the Horse,
And fast she holds her Idiot Boy.

And Johany burrs, and laughs aloud;
Whether in cunning or in joy
I cannot tell; but while he laughs,
Betty a drunken pleasure quaffs
To bear again her Idiot Boy.

And now she's at the Pony's tail,
And now is at the Pony's head,—
On that side now, and now on this,
And, almost stifled with her bliss,
A few sad tears does Betty shed.

She kisses o'er and o'er again
Him whom she loves, her Idiot Boy;
She's happy here, is happy there,
She is uneasy everywhere;
Her limbs are all alive with joy.

She pats the Pony, where or when
She knows not, happy Betty Foy!
The little Pony glad may be,
But he is milder far than she,
You hardly can perceive his joy.

"Oh! Johnny, never mind the Doctor;
You've done your best, and that is all:"
She took the reins, when this was said,
And gently turned the Pony's head
From the loud waterfall.

By this the stars were almost gone,
The moon was setting on the hill:
So pale you scarcely looked at her:
The little birds began to stir,
Though yet their tongues were still.

The Pony, Betty, and her Boy,
Wind slowly through the woodv dale;
And who is she, betimes abroad,
That hobbles up the steep rough road?
Who is it, but old Susan Gale?

Long time lay Susan lost in thought;
And many dreadful fears beset her,
Both for her Messenger and Nurse;
And, as her mind grew worse and worse,
Her body—it grew better.

She turned, she tossed herself in bed,
On all sides doubts and terrors met her;
Point after point did she discuss;
And, while her mind was fighting thus,
Her body still grew better.

"Alas! what is become of them?
These fears can never be endured;
I'll to the wood."—The word scarce said,
Did Susan rise up from her bed,
As if by magic cured.

Away she goes up hill and down,
And to the wood at length is come;

She spies her Friends, she shouts a
greeting;
Oh me! it is a merry meeting
As ever was in Christendom.

The owls have hardly sung their last,
While our four travellers homeward
weerd;

The owls have hooted all night long,
And with the owls began my song,
And with the owls must end.

For while they all were travelling home,
Cried Betty, "Tell us, Johnny, do,
Where all this long night you have been,
What you have heard, what you have
seen:

And, Johnny, mind you tell us true."

Now Johnny all night long had heard
The owls in tuneful concert strive;
No doubt too he the moon had seen;
For in the moonlight he had been
From eight o'clock till five.

And thus, to Betty's question, he
Made answer like a traveller bold,
(His very words I give to you,
"The cocks did crow, to-whoo, to-whoo,
And the sun did shine so cold!"
—Thus answered Johnny in his glory,
And that was all his travel's story.

1798.

XXXII MICHAEL

A PASTORAL POEM

If from the public way you turn your
steps
Up the tumultuous brook of Green-head
Ghyll,
You will suppose that with an upright
path
Your feet must struggle; in such hold-
ascent
The pastoral mountains front you, face
to face.
But, courage! for around that boisterous
brook
The mountains have all opened out them-
selves,
And made a hidden valley of their own.
No habitation can be seen; but they,
Who journey thither find themselves
alone
With a few sheep, with rocks and stones,
and kites
That overhead are sailing in the sky.
It is in truth an utter solitude;
Nor should I have made mention of this
Dell
But for one object which you might pass
by,
Might see and notice not. Beside the
brook

Appears a straggling heap of unbewn
stones !
And to that simple object appertains
A story—unriched with strange events,
Yet not unat; I deem, for the fireside,
Or for the summer shade. It was the
first
Of those domestic tales that spake to me
Of Shepherds, dwellers in the valleys,
men
Whom I already loved ;—not verily
For their own sakes, but for the fields
and hills
Where was their occupation and abode.
And hence this Tale, while I was yet a
Boy
Careless of books, yet having felt the
power
Of Nature, by the gentle agency
Of natural objects, led me on to feel
For passions that were not my own, and
think
(At random and imperfectly indeed)
On man, the heart of man, and human
life.
Therefore, although it be a history
Homely and rude, I will relate the same
For the delight of a few natural hearts ;
And, with yet fonder feeling, for the
sake
Of youthful Poets, who among these hills
Will be my second self when I am gone.

Upon the forest-side in Grasmere
Vale
There dwelt a Shepherd, Michael was his
name ;
An old man, stout of heart, and strong of
limb
His bodily frame had been from youth
to age
Of an unusual strength : his mind was
keen,
Intense, and frugal, apt for all affairs,
And in his shepherd's calling he was
prompt
And watchful more than ordinary men.
Hence had he learned the meaning of
all winds,
Of blasts of every tone ; and, oftentimes,
When others heeded not, He heard the
South
Make subterraneous music, like the noise
Of bagpipers on distant Highland hills.
The Shepherd, at such warning, of his
flock
Bethought him, and he to himself would
say,
'The winds are now devising work for
me !'
And, truly, at all times, the storm, that
drives
The traveller to a shelter, summoned him

Up to the mountains : he had been alone
Amid the heart of many thousand mists,
That came to him, and left him, on the
heights.
So lived he till his eightieth year was past.
And grossly that man errs, who should
suppose
That the green valleys, and the streams
and rocks,
Were things indifferent to the Shepherd's
thoughts.
Fields, where with cheerful spirits he had
breathed
The common air ; hills, which with
vigorous step
He had so often climbed ; which had
impressed
So many incidents upon his mind
Of hardship, skill or courage, joy or fear ;
Which, like a book, preserved the
memory
Of the dumb animals, whom he had saved,
Had fed or sheltered, linking to such acts
The certainty of honourable gain ;
Those fields, those hills—what could they
less ? had laid
Strong hold on his affections, were to
him
A pleasurable feeling of blind love,
The pleasure which there is in life itself.

His days had not been passed in single-
ness.
His Helpmate was a comely matron,
old—
Though younger than himself full twenty
years.
She was a woman of a stirring life,
Whose heart was in her house : two
wheels she had
Of antique form ; this large, for spinning
wool ;
That small, for flax : and if one wheel
had rest
It was because the other was at work.
The Pair had but one inmate in their
house,
An only Child, who had been born to
them
When Michael, telling o'er his years,
began
To deem that he was old,—in shepherd's
phrase,
With one foot in the grave. This only
Son,
With two brave sheep-dogs tried in
many a storm,
The one of an inestimable worth,
Made all their household. I may truly
say,
That they were as a proverb in the vale
For endless industry. When day was
gone,

And from their occupations out of doors
 The Son and Father were come home,
 even then,
 Their labour did not cease; unless
 when all
 Turned to the cleanly supper-board,
 and there,
 Each with a mess of pottage and
 skimmed milk,
 Sat round the basket piled with oaten
 cakes,
 And their plain home-made cheese.
 Yet when the meal
 Was ended, Luke (for so the Son was
 named)
 And his old Father both betook them-
 selves
 To such convenient work as might
 employ
 Their hands by the fire-side; perhaps
 to card
 Wool for the Housewife's spindle, or
 repair
 Some injury done to sickle, flail, or
 scythe,
 Or other implement of house or field.

Down from the ceiling, by the chim-
 ney's edge,
 That in our ancient uncouth country
 style
 With huge and black projection over-
 browed
 Large space beneath, as duly as the light
 Of day grew dim the Housewife hung
 a lamp;
 An aged utensil, which had performed
 Service beyond all others of its kind.
 Early at evening did it burn—and late,
 Surviving comrade of uncounted hours,
 Which, going by from year to year,
 had found,
 And left the couple neither gay perhaps
 Nor cheerful, yet with objects and with
 hopes,
 Living a life of eager industry.
 And now, when Luke had reached his
 eighteenth year,
 There by the light of this old lamp they
 sat,
 Father and Son, while far into the night
 The Housewife plied her own peculiar
 work,
 Making the cottage through the silent
 hours
 Murmur as with the sound of summer
 flies.
 This light was famous in its neighbour-
 hood,
 And was a public symbol of the life
 That thrifty Pair had lived. For, as
 it chanced,
 Their cottage on a plot of rising ground

Stood single, with large prospect, north
 and south,
 High into Easedale, up to Dunmail-
 Raise.
 And westward to the village near the lake;
 And from this constant light, so regular
 And so far seen, the House itself, by all
 Who dwelt within the limits of the vale,
 Both old and young, was named THE
 EVENING STAR.

Thus living on through such a length
 of years,
 The Shepherd, if he loved himself, must
 needs
 Have loved his Helpmate; but to
 Michael's heart
 This son of his old age was yet more
 dear—
 Less from instinctive tenderness, the
 same
 Fond spirit that blindly works in the
 blood of all—
 Than that a child, more than all other
 gifts
 That earth can offer to declining man,
 Brings hope with it, and forward-
 looking thoughts.
 And stirrings of inquietude, when they
 By tendency of nature needs must fail.
 Exceeding was the love he bore to him,
 His heart and his heart's joy! For
 oftentimes
 Old Michael, while he was a babe in arms,
 Had done him female service, not alone
 For pastime and delight, as is the use
 Of fathers, but with patient mind
 enforced
 To acts of tenderness; and he had rocked
 His cradle, as with a woman's gentle
 hand.

And, in a later time, ere yet the Boy
 Had put on boy's attire, did Michael love,
 Albeit of a stern unbending mind,
 To have the Young-one in his sight,
 when he
 Wrought in the field, or on his shepherd's
 stool
 Sate with a fettered sheep before him
 stretched
 Under the large old oak, that near his
 door
 Stood single, and, from matchless depth
 of shade,
 Chosen for the Shearer's covert from
 the sun,
 Thence in our rustic dialect was called
 The CLIPPING TREE,¹ a name which yet
 it bears.
 There, while they two were sitting in
 the shade,

¹ Clipping is the word used in the North of
 England for shearing.

With others round them, earnest all and blithe,
Would Michael exercise his heart with tools
Of fond correction and reproof bestowed
Upon the Child, if he disturbed the sheep
By catching at their legs, or with his shouts
Scared them, while they lay still beneath the shears.

And when by Heaven's good grace the boy grew up
A healthy Lad, and carried in his cheek
Two steady roses that were five years old ;
Then Michael from a winter coppice cut
With his own hand a sapling, which he hooped

With iron, making it throughout in all
Due requisites a perfect shepherd's staff,
And gave it to the Boy ; wherewith equipt

He as a watchman oftentimes was placed
At gate or gap, to stem or turn the flock ;
And, to his office prematurely called,
There stood the urchin, as you will divine,
Something between a hindrance and a help ;

And for this cause not always, I believe,
Receiving from his Father hire of praise ;
Though nought was left undone which staff, or voice,

• Or looks, or threatening gestures, could perform.

But soon as Luke, full ten years old, could stand
Against the mountain blasts ; and to the heights,

Not fearing toil, nor length of weary ways,
He with his Father daily went, and they
Were as companions, why should I relate
That objects which the Shepherd loved before

Were dearer now ? that from the Boy there came

Feelings and emanations—things which were

Light to the sun and music to the wind ;
And that the old Man's heart seemed born again ?

Thus in his Father's sight the Boy grew up :

And now, when he had reached his eighteenth year,

He was his comfort and his daily hope.

While in this sort the simple household lived

From day to day, to Michael's ear there came

Distressful tidings. Long before the time

Of which I speak, the Shepherd had been bound

In surety for his brother's son, a man
Of an industrious life, and ample means ;
But unforeseen misfortunes suddenly
Had prest upon him ; and old Michael now

Was summoned to discharge the forfeiture,

A grievous penalty, but little less
Than half his substance. This unlooked-for claim,

At the first hearing, for a moment took
More hope out of his life than he supposed
That any old man ever could have lost.
As soon as he had armed himself with strength

To look his trouble in the face, it seemed
The Shepherd's sole resource to sell at once

A portion of his patrimonial fields.
Such was his first resolve ; he thought again,

And his heart failed him. " Isabel," said he,

Two evenings after he had heard the news,

" I have been toiling more than seventy years,

And in the open sunshine of God's love
Have we all lived ; yet if these fields of ours

Should pass into a stranger's hand, I think

That I could not lie quiet in my grave.
Our lot is a hard lot ; the sun himself
Has scarcely been more diligent than I ;
And I have lived to be a fool at last
To my own family. An evil man

That was, and made an evil choice, if he
Were false to us ; and if he were not false,
There are ten thousand to whom loss
like this [but

Had been no sorrow. I forgives him ;—
'Twere better to be dumb than to talk thus.

When I began, my purpose was to speak

Of remedies and of a cheerful hope.
Our Luke shall leave us, Isabel ; the land
Shall not go from us, and it shall be free ;
He shall possess it, free as is the wind
That passes over it. We have, thou know'st,

Another kinsman—he will be our friend
In this distress. He is a prosperous man.
Thriving in trade—and Luke to him shall go,

And with his kinsman's help and his own thrift

He quickly will repair this loss, and then
He may return to us. If here he stay,

What can be done? Where every one
is poor,

What can be gained?"

At this the old Man paused,
And Isabel sat silent, for her mind
Was busy, looking back into past times.
There's Richard Bateman, thought she
to herself,

He was a parish-boy—at the church-
door

They made a gathering for him, shillings.
pence

And halfpennies, wherewith the neigh-
bours bought

A basket, which they filled with pedlar's
wares;

And, with this basket on his arm, the lad
Went up to London, found a master there,
Who, out of many, chose the trusty boy
To go and overlook his merchandise
Beyond the seas; where he grew
wondrous rich,

And left estates and monies to the poor,
And, at his birth-place, built a chapel
floored

With marble, which he sent from foreign
lands.

These thoughts, and many others of like
sort,

Passed quickly through the mind of
Isabel,

And her face brightened. The old
Man was glad,

And thus resumed:—"Well, Isabel!
this scheme

These two days, has been meat and drink
to me.

Far more than we have lost is left us yet.
—We have enough—I wish indeed
that I

Were younger;—but this hope is a good
hope.

—Make ready Luke's best garments,
of the best

Buy for him more, and let us send him
To-morr-^{ow}, or the next day, or to-night:

—If he *could* go, the Boy should go
to-night."

Here Michael ceased, and to the fields
went forth

With a light heart. The Housewife for
five days

Was restless morn and night, and all day
long

Wrought on with her best fingers to
prepare

Things needful for the journey of her son.
But Isabel was glad when Sunday came

To stop her in her work: for, when she
lay

By Michael's side, she through the last
two nights

Heard him, how he was troubled in
his sleep:

And when they rose at mornings she could
see

That all his hopes were gone. That
day at noon

She said to Luke, while they two by
themselves

Were sitting at the door, "Thou must
not go:

We have no other Child but thee to lose,
None to remember—do not go away,

For if thou leave thy Father he will die."

The Youth made answer with a jocund
voice:

And Isabel, when she had told her fears,
Recovered heart. That evening her
best fare

Did she bring forth, and all together sat
Like happy people round a Christmas fire.

With daylight, Isabel resumed her
work:

And all the ensuing week the house
appeared,

As cheerful as a grove in Spring: at
length

The expected letter from their kinsman
came,

With kind assurances that he would do
His utmost for the welfare of the Boy;

To which, requests were added, that
forthwith

He might be sent to him. Ten times
or more

The letter was read over; Isabel
Went forth to show it to the neighbours
round:

Nor was there at that time on English
land

A prouder heart than Luke's. When
Isabel

Had to her house returned, the old Man
said,

"He shall depart to-morrow." To
this word

The Housewife answered, talking much
of things

Which, if at such short notice he should
go,

Would surely be forgotten. But at
length

She gave consent, and Michael was at
ease.

Near the tumultuous brook of Green-
head Ghyll,

In that deep valley, Michael had designed
To build a sheep-fold; and, before he
heard

The tidings of his melancholy loss,
For this same purpose he had gathered up

A heap of stones, which by the streamlet's
edge

Lay thrown together, ready for the work.
With Luke that evening thitherward
he walked :

And soon as they had reached the place
he stopped,

And thus the old Man spake to him :—

“ My Son,

To-morrow thou wilt leave me : with
full heart

I look upon thee, for thou art the same
That wast a promise to me ere thy birth,
And all thy life hast been my daily joy.

I will relate to thee some little part
Of our two histories ; ’twill do thee good
When thou art from me, even if I should
touch

On things thou canst not know of.—

After thou

First cam’st into the world—as oft befalls
To new-born infants—thou didst sleep
away

Two days, and blessings from thy Father’s
tongue

Then fell upon thee. Day by day
passed on,

And still I loved thee with increasing
love.

Never to living ear came sweeter sounds
Than when I heard thee by our own
fireside

First uttering, without words, a natural
tune ;

• While thou, a feeding babe, didst in
thy joy

Sing at thy Mother’s breast. Month
followed month.

And in the open fields my life was passed
And on the mountains ; else I think
that thou

Hadst been brought up upon thy Father’s
knees.

But we were playmates, Luke : among
these hills,

As well thou knowest, in us the old and
young

Have played together, nor with me didst
thou

Lack any pleasure which a boy can
know.

Luke had a manly heart ; but at these
words

He sobbed aloud. The old Man
grasped his hand,

And said, “ Nay, do not take it so—
I see

That these are things of which I need
not speak.

—Even to the utmost I have been to
thee

A kind and a good Father : and herein
I but repay a gift which I myself

Received at others’ hands ; for, though
now old

Beyond the common life of man, I still
Remember them who loved me in my
youth.

Both of them sleep together : here
they lived,

As all their Forefathers had done ; and
when

At length their time was come, they
were not loth

To give their bodies to the family mould.
I wished that thou shouldst live the

life they lived :

But, ’tis a long time to look back, my
Son,

And see so little gain from threescore
years.

These fields were burthened when they
came to me ;

Till I was forty years of age, not more
Than half of my inheritance was mine.

I toiled and toiled ; God blessed me
in my work,

And till these three weeks past the land
was free.

—It looks as if it never could endure
Another Master. Heaven forgive me,
Luke,

If I judge ill for thee, but it seems good
That thou should’st go.”

At this the old Man paused ;
Then, pointing to the stones near which
they stood,

Thus, after a short silence, he resumed :
“ This was a work for us : and now,
my Son,

It is a work for me. But, lay one stone—
Here, lay it for me, Luke, with thine
own hands.

Nay, Boy, be of good hope ;—we both
may live

To see a better day. At eighty-four
I still am strong and hale ;—do thou
thy part ;

I will do mine.—I will begin again
With many tasks that were resigned to
thee :

Up to the heights, and in among the
storms,

Will I without thee go again, and do
All works which I was wont to do alone,
Before I knew thy face.—Heaven bless
thee, Boy !

Thy heart these two weeks has been
beating fast

With many hopes ; it should be so—yes
—yes—

I knew that thou could’st never have
a wish

To leave me, Luke : thou hast been
bound to me

Only by links of love : when thou art
gone,

What will be left to us !—But, I forget,

My purposes. Lay now the corner-stone,
As I requested; and hereafter, Luke,
When thou art gone away, should
evil men

Be thy companions, think of me, my Son,
And of this moment; hither turn thy
thoughts,

And God will strengthen thee : amid all
fear

And all temptation, Luke, I pray that
thou

May'st bear in mind the life thy
Fathers lived,

Who, being innocent, did for that cause
Bestir them in good deeds. Now, I are
thee well—

When thou return'st, thou in this place
wilt see

A work which is not here : a covenant
'Twill be between us ; but, whatever fate
Befall thee, I shall love thee to the last,
And bear thy memory with me to the
grave."

The Shepherd ended here ; and Luke
stooped down,

And, as his Father had requested, laid
The first stone of the Sheep-fold. At
the sight

The old Man's grief broke from him :
to his heart

He pressed his Son, he kiss'd him and
wept ;

And to the house together they returned.
—Hushed was that house in peace, or
seeming peace.

Ere the night fell :—with morrow's
dawn the Boy

Began his journey, and when he had
reached

The public way, he put on a bold face ;
And all the neighbours, as he pass'd
their doors,

Came forth with wishes and with farewell
prayers,

That followed him till he was out of sight.

A good report did from their Kinsman
come.

Of Luke and his well-doing : and the Boy
Wrote loving letters, full of wondrous
news,

Which, as the Housewife phrased it,
were throughout

'The prettiest letters that were ever
seen.'

Both parents read them with rejoicing
hearts.

So many months passed on : and once
again

The Shepherd went about his daily work
With confident and cheerful thoughts ;
and now

Sometimes when he could find a leisure
hour

He to that valley took his way, and
there

Wrought at the Sheep-fold. Meantime
Luke began

To slacken in his duty ; and, at length,
He in the dissolute city gave himself
To evil courses : ignominy and shame
Fell on him, so that he was driven at last
To seek a hiding-place beyond the seas—

There is a comfort in the strength of
love :

'Twill make a thing endurable, which else
Would overset the brain, or break the
heart :

I have conversed with more than one
who well

Remember the old Man, and what he
was

Years after he had heard this heavy news.
His bodily frame had been from youth to

age
Of an unusual strength. Among the

rocks
He went, and still look'd up to sun and

cloud,
And listened to the wind : and, as

before,
Performed all kinds of labour for his

sheep,
And for the land, his small inheritance.

And to that hollow dell from time to
time

Did he repair, to build the Fold of which
His flock had need. 'Tis not forgotten

yet
The pity which was then in every heart

For the old Man—and 'tis believed by
all

That many and many a day he thither
went,

And never lifted up a single stone.

There, by the Sheep-fold, sometimes
was he seen

Sitting alone, or with his faithful Dog,
Then old, beside him, lying at his feet.

The length of full seven years, from
time to time,

He at the building of this Sheep-fold
wrought,

And left the work unfinished when he
died.

Three years, or little more, did Isabel
Survive her Husband : at her death the

estate
Was sold, and went into a stranger's

hand.
The Cottage which was named the

EVENING STAR
is gone—the ploughshare has been
through the ground"

On which it stood; great changes
have been wrought
In all the neighbourhood:—yet the oak
is left
That grew beside their door; and the
remains
Of the unfinished Sheep-fold may be seen
Beside the boisterous brook of, Green-
head Ghyll.

1800.

XXXIII.
THE WIDOW ON WINDERMERE
SIDE

How beautiful when up a lofty height
Honour ascends among the humblest
poor,
And feeling sinks as deep! See there, the
door
Of One, a Widow, left beneath a
weight
Of blameless debt. Oh evil Fortune's
spite
She wasted no complaint, but strove to
make
A just repayment, both for conscience-
sake
And that herself and hers should stand
upright
In the world's eye. Her work when
daylight failed
Paused not, and through the depth of
night she kept
Such earnest vigils, that belief prevailed
With some, the noble Creature never
slept;
But, one by one, the hand of death
assailed
Her children from her inmost heart
bewept.

II

The Mother mourned, nor ceased her
tears to flow,
Till a winter's noon-day placed her
buried Son
Before her eyes, last child of many
gone—
His raiment of angelic white, and lo!
His very feet bright as the dazzling
snow
Which they are touching; yea far
brighter, even
As that which comes, or seems to come,
from heaven,
Surpasses aught these elements can show.
Much she rejoiced, trusting that from
that hour
What'er beryl she could not grieve or
pine;
But the Transfigured, in and out of
season.

P.W.

Appeared, and spiritual presence gained
a power
Over material forms that mastered
reason.
Oh, gracious Heaven, in pity make her
thine!

III

But why that prayer? as if to her could
come
No good but by the way that leads to
"bliss
Through Death,—so judging we should
judge amiss.
Since reason failed want is her threatened
doom,
Yet frequent transports mitigate the
gloom:
Nor of those maniacs is she one that kiss
The air or laugh upon a precipice;
No, passing through strange sufferings
toward the tomb
She smiles as if a martyr's crown were
won:
Oft, when light breaks through clouds or
waving trees,
With outspread arms and fallen upon
her knees
The Mother hails in her descending Son
An Angel, and in earthly ecstasies
Her own angelic glory seems begun.

XXXIV

THE ARMENIAN LADY'S LOVE

[The subject of the following poem is from the
Orlandus of the author's friend, Kenelm
Henry Digby: and the liberty is taken of
inscribing it to him as an acknowledgment,
however unworthy, of pleasure and instruc-
tion derived from his numerous and valuable
writings, illustrative of the piety and chivalry
of the olden time.]

I

You have heard "a Spanish Lady
How she wooed an English man;"
Hear now of a fair Armenian,
Daughter of the proud Soldan:
How she loved a Christian Slave, and
told her pain
By word, look, deed, with hope that he
might love again.

II

"Pluck that rose, it moves my liking,"
Said she, lifting up her veil;
"Pluck it for me, gentle gardener,
Ere it wither and grow pale."
"Princess fair, I till the ground, but
may not take
From twig or bed an humbler flower,
even for your sake!"

¹ See, in *Percy's Reliques*, that fine old
ballad, "The Spanish Lady's Love;" from
which Poem the form of stanza, as suitable to
dialogue, is adopted.

"Grieved am I, submissive Christian !
To behold thy captive state ;
Women, in your land, may pity
(May they not ?) the unfortunate."
"Yes, kind Lady ! otherwise man could
not bear
Life, which to every one that breathes is
full of care."

IV

"Worse than idle is compassion
If it end in tears and sighs ;
Thee from bondage would I rescue
And from vile indignities :
Nurtured, as thy mien bespeaks, in
high degree,
Look up— and help a hand that longs to
set thee free."

V

"Lady ! dread the wish, nor venture
In such peril to engage ;
Think how it would stir against you
Your most loving father's rage :
Sad deliverance would it be, and yoked
with shame,
Should troubles overflow on her from
whom it came."

VI

"Generous Frank ! the just in effort
Are of inward peace secure :
Hardships for the brave encountered,
Even the feeblest may endure :
If almighty grace through me thy chains
unbind
My father for slave's work may seek a
slave in mind."

VII

"Princess, at this burst of goodness,
My long-frozen heart grows warm !"
"Yet you make all courage fruitless,
Me to save from chance of harm :
Leading such companion I that gilded
dome,
Yon minarets, would gladly leave for
his worst home."

VIII

"Feeling tunes your voice, fair
Princess !
And your brow is free from scorn,
Else these words would come like
mockery,
Sharper than the pointed thorn."
"Whence the undeserved mistrust ?
Too wide apart
Our faith hath been,—O would that
eyes could see the heart !"

IX

"Tempt me not, I pray ; my doom is
These base implements to wield ;

Rusty lance, I ne'er shall grasp thee,
Ne'er assail my cobwebb'd shield !
Never see my native land, nor castle
towers,
Nor Her who thinking of me there
counts widowed hours."

X

"Prisoner ! pardon youthful fancies ;
Wedded ? If you *can*, say no !
Blessed is and be your consort ;
Hopes I cherished—let them go :
Handmaid's privilege would leave my
purpose free.
Without another link to my felicity."

XI

"Wedded love with loyal Christians,
Lady, is a mystery rare ;
Body, heart, and soul in union,
Make one being of a pair."
"Humble love in me would look for no
return,
Soft as a guiding star that cheers, but
cannot burn."

XII

"Gracious Allah ! by such title
Do I dare to thank the God.
Him who thus exalts thy spirit,
Flower of an unchristian sod !
Or hast thou put off wings which thou
in heaven dost wear ?
What have I seen, and heard, or dreamt ?
"where am I ? where ?"

XIII

Here broke off the dangerous con-
verse :
Less impassioned words might tell
How the pair escaped together.
Tears not wanting, nor a knell
Of sorrow in her heart while through her
father's door,
And from her narrow world, she passed
for evermore.

XIV

But affections higher, holier,
Urged her steps ; she shrank from
trust
In a sensual creed that trampled
Woman's birthright into dust.
Little be the wonder then, the blame be
none,
If she, "a timid Maid, hath put such
boldness on."

XV

Judge both Fugitives with knowledge :
In those old romantic days
Mighty were the soul's commandments
To support, restrain, or raise.

Foes might hang upon their path, snakes
rustle near,
But nothing from their inward selves
•• had they to fear.

XVI

Thought infirm ne'er came between
them,
Whether printing desert sands
With accordant steps, or gathering
Forest-fruit with social hands:
Or whispering like two reeds that in the
cold-moonbeam
Bend with the breeze their heads,
beside a crystal stream.

XVII

On a friendly deck reposing,
They at length for Venice stop;
There, when they had closed their
voyage,
One, who daily on the pier
Watched for tidings from the East,
beheld 'tis Lord,
Fell down and clasped his knees for joy,
not uttering word.

XVIII

Mutual was the sudden transport:
Breathless questions followed fast,
Years contracting to a moment,
Each word greedier than the last:
"Hie thee to the Countess, friend! re-
turn with speed,
And of this Stranger speak by whom her
lord was freed.

XIX

Say that I, who might have languished,
Drooped and pined till life was
spent,
Now before the gates of Stolberg
My Deliverer would present
For a crowning recompense, the precious
grace
Of her who in my heart still holds her
ancient place.

XX

Makes it known that my Companion
Is of royal eastern blood,
Thirsting after all perfection,
Innocent, and meek, and good,
Though with misbelievers bred; but
that dark night
Will holy Church disperse by beams of
gospel-light."

XXI

Swiftly went that grey-haired Servant,
Soon returned a trusty Page
Charged with greetings, benedictions,
Thanks and praises, each a gage

For a sunny thought, to cheer the Stran-
ger's way, [fears allay.
Her virtuous scruples to remove, her

XXII

And how blest the Reunited,
While beneath their castle-walls,
Runs a deafening noise of welcome!—
Blest, though every tear that falls
Doth in its silence of past sorrow tell,
And makes a meeting seem most like a
dear farewell.

XXIII

Through a haze of human nature,
Glorified by heavenly light,
Looked the beautiful Deliverer
On that overpowering sight,
While across her virgin cheek pure
blushes strayed
For every tender sacrifice her heart had
made.

XXIV

On the ground the weeping Countess
Kneelt, and kissed the Stranger's
hand;
Act of soul-devoted homage,
Pledge of an eternal band:
Nor did aught of future days that kiss
belie,
Which, with a generous shout, the crowd
did ratify.

XXV

Constant to the fair Armenian,
Gentle pleasures round her joyed,
Like a tutelary spirit
Reverenced, like a sister, loved.
Christian meekness smoothed for all the
path of life,
Who, loving most, should wiseliest love,
their only strife.

XXVI

Mute memento of that union
In a Saxon church survives,
Where a cross-legged Knight lies
sculptured
As between two wedded Wives—
Figures with armorial signs of race and
birth,
And the vain rank the pilgrims bore
while yet on earth.

1830.

XXXV.

LOVING AND LIKING:

IRREGULAR VERSES,

ADDRESSED TO A CHILD

(BY MY SISTER)

THERE'S more in words than I can
teach:
Yet listen, Child!—I would not preach;

But only give some plain directions
To guide your speech and your affec-
tions,

Say not you *love* a roasted fowl,
But you may love a screaming owl,
And, if you can, the unwieldy toad
That crawls from his secure abode
Within the mossy garden wall
When evening dews begin to fall.
Oh mark the beauty of his eye :
What wonders in that circle lie !
So clear, so bright, our fathers said
He wears a jewel in his head !
And when, upon some showery day,
Into a path or public way
A frog leaps out from bordering grass,
Startling the timid as they pass,
Do you observe him, and endeavour
To take the intruder into favour ;
Learning from him to find a reason
For a light heart in a dull season.
And you may love him in the pool,
That is for him a happy school,
In which he swims as taught by nature,
Fit pattern for a human creature,
Glancing amid the water bright,
And sending upward sparkling light.

Nor blush if o'er your heart be stealing
A love for things that have no feeling :
The spring's first rose by you espied,
May fill your breast with joyful pride ;
And you may love the strawberry-
flower,
And love the strawberry in its bower ;
But when the fruit, so often praised
For beauty, to your lip is raised,
Say not you *love* the delicate treat,
But *like* it, enjoy it, and thankfully eat.

Long may you love your pensioner
mouse,
Though one of a tribe that torment the
house :

Nor dislike for her cruel sport the cat,
Deadly to both of mouse and rat ;
Remember she follows the law of her
kind,
And instinct is neither wayward nor
blind.
Then think of her beautiful gliding
form,
Her tread that would scarcely crush a
worm,
And her soothing song by the winter fire,
Soft as the dying throb of the lyre.

I would not circumscribe your love :
It may soar with the eagle and brood
with the dove,
May pierce the earth with the patient
mole,

Or track the hedgehog to his hole,
Loving and liking are the solace of life,

Rock the cradle of joy, smooth the
death-bed of strife.

You love your father and your mother,
Your grown-up and your baby brother ;
You love your sister, and your friends,
And countless blessings which God sends :
And while these right affections play,
You live each moment of your day ;
They lead you on to full content,
And likings fresh and innocent,
That store the mind, the memory feed,
And prompt to many a gentle deed :
But *likings* come, and pass away ;
'Tis *love* that remains till our latest day :
Our heavenward guide is holy love,
And will be our bliss with saints above.

1832.

XXXVI

FAREWELL LINES

"HIGH bliss is only for a higher state,"
But, surely, if severe afflictions borne
With patience merit the reward of peace,
Peace ye deserve ; and may the solid
good,
Sought by a wise though late exchange,
and here
With bounteous hand beneath a cottage-
roof
To you accorded, never be withdrawn,
Nor for the world's best promises re-
nounced.
Most soothing was it for a welcome
Friend,
Fresh from the crowded city, to behold
That lonely union, privacy so deep,
Such calm employments, such entire
content.

So when the rain is over, the storm laid,
A pair of herons oft-times have I seen,
Upon a rocky islet, side by side,
Drying their feathers in the sun, at
ease ;

And so, when night with grateful gloom
had fallen,
Two glow-worms in such nearness that
they shared,
As seemed, their soft self-satisfying
light,

Each with the other, on the dewy
ground,
Where He that made them blesses their
repose.—

When wandering among lakes and hills
I note,

Once more, those creatures thus by
nature paired,
And guarded in their tranquil state of
life,

Even, as your happy presence to my
mind
Their union brought, will they repay the
debt.

And send a thankful spirit back to you,
With hope that we, dear Friends! shall
meet again.

XXXVII

THE REDBREAST

(SUGGESTED IN A WESTMORELAND COTTAGE)

DRIVEN in by Autumn's sharpening air
From half-stripped woods and pastures
bare,

Brisk Robin seeks a kindlier home :

Not like a beggar is he come,
But enters as a looked-for guest,
Confiding in his ruddy breast,
As if it were a natural shield
Charged with a blazon on the field,
Due to that good and pious deed
Of which we in the Ballad read.
But pensive fancies putting by,
And wild-wood sorrows, speedily
He plays the expert ventriloquist ;
And, caught by glimpses now—now
missed,

Puzzles the listener with a doubt
If the soft voice he throws about
Comes from within doors or without !
Was ever such a sweet confusion,
Sustained by delicate illusion ?
He's at your elbow—to your feeling
The notes are from the floor or ceiling ;
And there's a riddle to be guessed,
'Till you have marked his heaving chest,
And busy throat whose sink and swell,
Betray the Elf that love; to dwell
In Robin's bosom, as a chosen cell.

Heart-pleased we smile upon the Bird
If seen, and with like pleasure stirred
Command him, when he's only heard.
But small and fugitive our gain
Compared with hers who long hath lain,
With languid limbs and patient head
Reposing on a lone sick-bed ;
Where now, she daily hears a strain
That cheats her of too busy cares,
Eases her pain, and helps her prayers.
And who but this dear Bird beguiled
The fever of that pale-faced Child ;
Now cooing, with his passing wing,
Her forehead, like a breeze of Spring :
Recalling now, with descendant soft
Shed round her pillow from aloft,
Sweet thoughts of angels hovering nigh,
And the invisible sympathy
Of " Matthew, Mark, and Luke, and John,
Blessing the bed she lies upon ? "

1 The words—

" Matthew, Mark, and Luke, and John,
Bless the bed that I lie on."
are part of a child's prayer, still in general use
through the northern counties.

And sometimes, just as listening ends
In slumber, with the cadence blends
A dream of that low-warbled hymn
Which old folk, fondly pleased to trim
Lamps of faith, now burning dim,
Say that the Cherubs carved in stone,
When clouds gave way at dead of night
And the ancient church was filled with
light,

Used to sing in heavenly tone,
Above and round the sacred places
They guard, with winged baby-faces.

Thrice happy Creature ! in all lands
Nurtured by hospitable hands :
Free entrance to this cot has he,
Entrance and exit both yet free ;
And, when the keen unruffled weather
That thus brings man and bird together,
Shall with its pleasantness be past,
And casement closed and door made
fast,

To keep at bay the howling blast,
He needs not fear the season's rage,
For the whole house is Robin's cage.
Whether the bird flit here or there,
O'er table *lilt*, or perch on chair,
Though some may frown and make a
stir,

To scare him as a trespasser,
And he belike will flinch or start,
Good friends he has to take his part ;
One chiefly, who with voice and look
Pleads for him from the chimney-nook,
Where sits the Dame, and wears away
Her long and vacant holiday ;
With images about her heart,
Reflected from the years gone by,
On human nature's second infancy.

1834.

XXXVIII

HER EYES ARE WILD.

I

HER eyes are wild, her head is bare,
The sun has burnt her coal-black hair ;
Her eyebrows have a rusty stain,
And she came far from over the main.
She has a baby on her arm,
Or else she were alone :
And underneath the hay-stack warm,
And on the greenwood stone,
She talked and sung the woods among,
And it was in the English tongue.

II

" Sweet babe ! they say that I am mad,
But nay, my heart is far too glad ;
And I am happy when I sing
Full many a sad and doleful thing :
Then, lovely baby, do not fear !

I pray thee have no fear of me ;
But safe as in a cradle, here
My lovely baby ! thou shalt be :
To thee I know too much I owe ;
I cannot work thee any woe.

III

A fire was once within my brain ;
And in my head a dull, dull pain ;
And fiendish faces, one, two, three.
Hung at my breast, and pulled at me :
But then there came a sight of joy ;
It came at once to do me good ;
I waked, and saw my little boy.
My little boy of flesh and blood ;
Oh joy for me that sight to see !
For he was here, and only he.

IV

Suck, little babe, oh suck again !
It cools my blood ; it cools my brain ;
Thy lips I feel them, baby ! they
Draw from my heart the pain away.
Oh ! press me with thy little hand ;
It loosens something at my chest :
About that tight and deadly band
I feel thy little fingers prest.
The breeze I see is in the tree :
It comes to cool my babe and me.

V

Oh ! love me, love me, little boy !
Thou art thy mother's only joy ;
And do not dread the waves below,
When o'er the sea-rock's edge we go ;
The high crag cannot work me harm,
Nor leaping torrents when they howl ;
The babe I carry on my arm,
He saves for me my precious soul ;
Then happy lie ; for blest am I :
Without me my sweet babe would die.

VI

Then do not fear, my boy ! for thee
Bold as a lion will I be ;
And I will always be thy guide.
Through hollow snows and rivers wide.
I'll build an Indian bower ; I know
The leaves that make the softest bed :
And, if from me thou wilt not go,
But still be true till I am dead,
My pretty thing ! then thou shalt sing
As merry as the birds in spring.

VII

Thy father cares not for my breast,
'Tis thine, sweet baby, there to rest ;
'Tis all thine own !—and, if its hue
Be changed, that was so fair to view,
'Tis fair enough for thee, my dove !
My beauty, little child, is flown,
But thou wilt live with me in love ;
And what if my poor cheek be brown ?
'Tis well for me, thou canst not see
How pale and wan it else would be.

VIII

Dread not their taunts, my little Life ;
I am thy father's wedded wife ;
And underneath the spreading tree
We two will live in honesty.
If his sweet boy he could forsake,
With me he never would have stayed :
From him no harm my babe can take ;
But he, poor man ! is wretched made ;
And every day we two will pray
For him that's gone and far away.

IX

I'll teach my boy the sweetest things :
I'll teach him, how the owl sings.
My little babe ! thy lips are still,
And thou hast almost sucked thy fill.
—Where art thou gone, my own dear
child ?
What wicked looks are those I see ?
Alas ! alas ! that look so wild,
It never, never came from me :
If thou art mad, my pretty lad,
Then I must be for ever sad.

X

Oh ! smile on me, my little lamb !
For I thy own dear mother am :
My love for thee has well been tried ;
I've sought thy father far and wide.
I know the poisons of the shade ;
I know the earth-nuts fit for food ;
Then, pretty dear, be not afraid :
We'll find thy father in the wood.
Now laugh and be gay, to the woods
away !
And there, my babe, we'll live for aye."
e 1798.

POEMS ON THE NAMING OF PLACES

ADVERTISEMENT

By persons resident in the country and attached to rural objects, many places will be found unnamed or of unknown names, where little Incidents must have occurred, or feelings been experienced, which will have given to such places a private and peculiar interest. From a wish to live some sort of record to such Incidents, and renew the gratification of such feelings, Names have been given to Places by the Author and some of his Friends, and the following Poems written in consequence.

It was an April morning: fresh and clear
The Rivulet, delighting in its strength,
Ran with a young man's speed; and yet the voice

Of waters which the winter had supplied
Was softened down into a vernal tone.
The spirit of enjoyment and desire,
And hopes and wishes, from all living things

Went circling, like a multitude of sounds.
The budding groves seemed eager to urge on

The steps of June; as if their various hues

Were only hindrances that stood between
Them and their object. but, near while, prevailed

Such an entire contentment in the air
That every naked ash, and tardy tree
Yet leafless, showed as if the countenance

With which it looked on this delightful day

Were native to the summer.—Up the brook

I roamed in the confusion of my heart,
Alive to all things and forgetting all.

At length I to a sudden turning came
In this continuous glen, where down a rock

The Stream, so ardent in its course before,

Sent forth such sallies of glad sound, that all

Which I till then had heard, appeared the voice

Of common pleasure: beast and bird, the lamb,

The shepherd's dog, the linnet and the thrush

Vied with this waterfall, and made a song,

Which, while I listened, seemed like the wild growth

Or like some natural produce of the air,
That could not cease to be. Green leaves were here;

But 'twas the foliage of the rocks—the birch,

The yew, the holly, and the bright green thorn.

With hanging islands of resplendent furze:

And, on a summit, distant a short space,
By any who should look beyond the dell,
A single mountain-cottage might be seen.

I gazed and gazed, and to myself I said,
“Our thoughts at least are ours; and this wild nook,

My EMMA, I will dedicate to thee.”

—Soon did the spot become my other home,

My dwelling, and my out-of-doors abode.
And, of the Shepherds who have seen me there,

To whom I sometimes in our idle talk
Have told this fancy, two or three, perhaps,

Years after we are gone and in our graves,
When they have cause to speak of this wild place,

May call it by the name of EMMA'S DELL.

1800.

II

TO JOANNA

AMID the smoke of cities did you pass
The time of early youth; and there you learned,

From years of quiet industry, to love
The living Beings by your own fire-side,

With such a strong devotion, that your heart

Is slow to meet the sympathies of them
Who look upon the hills with tenderness,

And make dear friendships with the streams and groves.

Yet we, who are transgressors in this kind,

Dwelling retired in our simplicity
Among the woods and fields, we love you well,

Joanna! and I guess, since you have been
So distant from us now for two long years,

That you will gladly listen to discourse;
However trivial, if you thence be taught

That they, with whom you once were happy, talk

Familiarly of you and of old times.

While I was seated, now some ten
 days past,
 Beneath those lofty firs; that overtop
 Their ancient neighbour, the old steeple-
 tower,
 The Vicar from his gloomy house hard by
 Came forth to greet me; and when he
 had asked,
 "How fares Joanna, that wild-hearted
 Maid!
 And when will she return to us?" he
 paused;
 And, after short exchange of village
 news,
 He with grave looks demanded, for what
 cause,
 Reviving obsolete idolatry,
 I, like a Runic Priest, in characters
 Of formidable size had chiselled out
 Some uncouth name upon the native rock,
 Above the Rotha, by the forest-side.
 —Now, by those dear immunities of
 heart
 Engendered between malice and true
 love,
 I was not loth to be so catechised,
 And this was my reply:—"As it befel,
 One summer morning we had walked
 abroad
 At break of day, Joanna and myself.
 —'Twas that delightful season when the
 broom,
 Full-flowered, and visible on every steep,
 Along the copses runs in veins of gold.
 Our pathway led us on to Rotha's
 banks;
 And when we came in front of that tall
 rock
 That eastward looks, I there stopped
 short—and stood
 Tracing the lofty barrier with my eye
 From base to summit; such delight-I
 found
 To note in shrub and tree, in stone and
 flower
 That intermixture of delicious hues,
 Along so vast a surface, all at once,
 In one impression, by concurring force
 Of their own beauty, imaged in the
 heart.
 —When I had gazed perhaps two
 minutes' space,
 Joanna, looking in my eyes, beheld
 That ravishment of mine, and laughed
 aloud.
 The Rock, like something starting from
 a sleep.
 Took up the Lady's voice, and laughed
 again;
 That ancient Woman seated on Helm-
 crag
 Was ready with her cavern; Hammar-

And the tall Steep of Silver-how, sent
 forth
 A noise of laughter; southern Loughrigg
 heard,
 And Fairfield answered with a mountain
 tone;
 Helvellyn far into the clear blue sky
 Carried the Lady's voice,—old Skiddaw
 blew
 His speaking-trumpet;—back out of the
 clouds
 Of Glaramara southward came the
 voice;
 And Kirkstone tossed it from his misty
 head.
 —Now* whether (said I to our cordial
 Friend,
 Who in the hey-day of astonishment
 Smiled in my face) this were in simple
 truth
 A work accomplished by the brotherhood
 Of ancient mountains, if my ear was
 touched
 With dreams and visionary impulses
 To me alone imparted, Sure I am
 That there was a loud uproar in the
 hills.
 And, while we both were listening, to my
 side
 The fair Joanna drew, as if she wished
 To shelter from some object of her fear.
 —And hence, long afterwards, when
 eighteen moons
 Were wasted, as I chanced to walk alone
 Beneath this rock, at sunrise, on a calm
 And silent morning, I sat down, and
 there,
 In memory of affections old and true,
 I chiselled out in those rude characters
 Joanna's name deep in the living stone:—
 And I, and all who dwell by my fire-
 side,
 Have called the lovely rock, JOANNA'S
 Rock."

1800.

Note.—In Cumberland and Westmoreland are several Inscriptions, upon the native rock, which, from the wasting of time, and the rudeness of the workmanship, have been mistaken for Runic. They are without doubt Roman.

The Rotha, mentioned in this poem, is the River which, flowing through the lakes of Grasmere and Rydale, falls into Wyanndermere. On Helmcrag, that impressive single mountain at the head of the Vale of Grasmere, is a rock which from most points of view bears a striking resemblance to an old Woman cowering. Close by this rock is one of those fissures or caverns, which in the language of the country are called dungeons. Most of the mountains here mentioned immediately surround the Vale of Grasmere; of the others, some are at a considerable distance, but they belong to the same cluster.

III

THERE is an Eminence,—of these our
hills
The last that parleys with the setting
sun;
We can behold it from our orchard-
seat;
And, when, at evening we pursue our
walk
Along the public way, this Peak, so
high
Above us, and so distant in its height,
Is visible; and often seems to send
Its own deep quiet to restore our hearts.
The meteors make of it a favourite
haunt:
The star of Jove, so beautiful and large
In the mid heavens, is never half so fair
As when he shines above it. As in
truth
The loneliest place we have among the
clouds.
And She who dwells with me, whom I
have loved
With such communion, that no place on
earth
Can ever be a solitude to me,
Hath to this lonely Summit given my
Name.

1800.

IV

A narrow girdle of rough stones and
crag,
A rude and natural causeway, interposed
Between the water and a winding
slope
Of copse and thicket, leaves the eastern
shore
Of Grasmere safe in its own privacy:
And there myself and two beloved
Friends,
One calm September morning, ere the
mist
Had altogether yielded to the sun,
Sauntered on this retired and difficult
ay.
Ill suits the road with one in haste:
but we
Played with our time; and, as we
strolled along,
It was our occupation to observe
Such objects as the waves had tossed
ashore—
Feather, or leaf, or weed, or withered
bough,
Each on the other heaped, along the
line
Of the dry wreck. And, in our vacant
mood,
Not seldom did we stop to watch some
tuft

Of dandelion seed or thistle's beard,
That skimmed the surface of the dead
calm lake,
Suddenly halting now—a lifeless stand!
And starting off again with freak as
sudden;
In all its sportive wanderings, all the
while,
Making report of an invisible breeze
That was its wings, its chariot, and its
horse,
Its playmate, rather say, its moving
soul.
—And often, trifling with a privilege
Alike indulged to all, we paused, one
now,
And now the other, to point out, per-
chance
To pluck, some flower or water-weed, too
fair
Either to be divided from the place
On which it grew, or to be left alone
To its own beauty. Many such there
are,
Fair ferns and flowers, and chiefly that
tall fern,
So stately, of the queen Osmunda
named;
Plant lover, in its own retired abode
On Grasmere's beach, than Naiad by
the side
Of Grexian brook, or Lady of the Mere,
Sole-sitting by the shores of old romance.
—So fared we that bright morning:
from the fields,
Meanwhile, a noise was heard, the busy
mirth
Of reapers, men and women, boys and
girls.
Delighted much to listen to those sounds,
And feeding thus our fancies, we ad-
vanced
Along the indented shore; when suddenly,
Through a thin veil of glittering haze
was seen
Before us, on a point of jutting land,
The tall and upright figure of a Man
Attired in peasant's garb, who stood
alone,
Angling beside the margin of the lake.
"Improvident and reckless," we ex-
claimed.
"The Man must be, who thus can lose a
day
Of the mid harvest, when the labourer's
hire
Is ample, and some little might be
stored
Wherewith to cheer him in the winter
time."
Thus talking of that Peasant, we ap-
proached [line
Close to the spot where with his rod and

He stood alone; whereat he turned his head
 To greet us—and we saw a Man worn down
 By sickness, gaunt and lean, with sunken cheeks
 And wasted limbs, his legs so long and lean
 That for my single self I looked at them,
 Forgetful of the body they sustained.—
 Too weak to labour in the harvest field,
 The Man was using his best skill to gain
 A pittance from the dead unfeeling lake
 That knew not of his wants. I will not say
 What thoughts immediately were ours,
 nor how
 The happy idleness of that sweet morn,
 With all its lovely images, was changed
 To serious musing and to self-reproach.
 Nor did we fail to see within ourselves
 What need there is to be reserved in speech,
 And temper all our thoughts with charity.
 —Therefore, unwilling to forget that day,
 My Friend, Myself, and She who then received
 The same admonishment, have called the place
 By a memorial name, uncouth indeed
 As e'er by mariner was given to bay
 Or foreland, on a new-discovered coast;
 And POINT RASH-JUDGMENT is the name it bears.

1800.

v

TO M. H.

OUR walk was far among the ancient trees:
 There was no road, nor any woodman's path;
 But a thick umbrage—checking the wild growth
 Of weed and sapling, along soft green turf
 Beneath the branches—of itself had made
 A track, that brought us to a slip of lawn,
 And a small bed of water in the woods.
 All round this pool both flocks and herds might drink
 On its firm margin, even as from a well,
 Or some stone-basin which the herdsman's hand
 Had shaped for their refreshment; nor did sun,
 Or wind from any quarter, ever come,
 But as a blessing to this calm recess,

This glade of water and this one green field.
 The spot was made by Nature for herself:
 The travellers know it not, and 'twill remain
 Unknown to them; but it is beautiful;
 And if a man should plant his cottage near,
 Should sleep beneath the shelter of its trees,
 And blend its waters with his daily meal,
 He would so love it, that in his death-hour
 Its image would survive among his thoughts:
 And therefore, my sweet MARY, this still Nook,
 With all its beeches, we have named from You!

1800.

vi

WHEN, to the attractions of the busy world,
 Preferring studious leisure, I had chosen
 A habitation in this peaceful Vale,
 Sharp season followed of continual storm
 In deepest winter; and, from week to week,
 Pathway, and lane, and public road,
 were clogged
 With frequent showers of snow. Upon a hill
 At a short distance from my cottage, stands
 A stately Fir-grove, whither I was wont
 To hasten, for I found, beneath the roof
 Of that perennial shade, a cloistral place
 Of refuge, with an unincumbered floor.
 Here, in safe covert, on the shallow snow,
 And, sometimes, on a speck of visible earth,
 The redbreast, near me hopped; nor was I loth
 To sympathise with vulgar coppice birds
 That, for protection from the nipping blast,
 Hither repaired.—A single beech-tree grew
 Within this grove of firs! and, on the fork
 Of that one beech, appeared a thrush's nest;
 A last year's nest, conspicuously built
 At such small elevation from the ground.
 As gave sure sign that they, who in that house

Of nature and of love had made their home
 Amid the fir-trees, all the summer long
 Dwelt in a tranquil spot. And often-times,
 A few sheep, stragglers from some mountain-flock,
 Would watch my motions with suspicious stare,
 From the remotest outskirts of the grove—
 Some nook where they had made their final stand,
 Huddling together from two fears—the fear
 Of me and of the storm. Full many an hour
 Here did I lose. But in this grove the trees
 Had been so thickly planted, and had been
 In such perplexed and intricate array;
 That vainly did I seek, beneath their stems
 A length of open space, where to and fro
 My feet might move without concern or care;
 And, baffled thus, though earth from day to day
 Was fettered, and the air by storm disturbed,
 I ceased the shelter to frequent,—and prized,
 Less than I wished to prize, that calm recess.

The snows dissolved, and genial Spring returned
 To clothe the fields with verdure. Other haunts
 Meanwhile were mine; till, one bright April day,
 By chance retiring from the glare of noon
 To this forsaken covert, there I found
 A hoary pathway traced between the trees.
 And winding on with such an easy line
 Along a natural opening, that I stood
 Much wondering how I could have sought in vain
 For what was now so obvious. To abide,
 For an allotted interval of ease,
 Under my cottage-roof, had gladly come
 From the wild sea a cherished Visitant;
 And with the sight of this same path—
 begun.
 Begun and ended, in the shady grove,
 Pleasant conviction flashed upon my mind
 That, to this opportune recess allured.

He had surveyed it with a finer eye,
 A heart more wakeful; and had worn the track
 By pacing here, unwearied and alone,
 In that habitual restlessness of foot
 That haunts the Sailor measuring o'er and o'er
 His short domain upon the vessel's deck.
 While she pursues her course through the dreary sea.

When thou hadst quitted Esthwaite's pleasant shore, hills
 And taken thy first leave of those green
 And rocks that were the play-ground of thy youth,
 Year followed year, my Brother! and we two,
 Conversing not, knew little in what mould
 Each other's mind was fashioned; and at length,
 When once again we met in Grasmere Vale,
 Between us there was little other bond
 Than common feelings of fraternal love.
 But thou, a School-boy, to the sea hadst carried
 Undying recollections; Nature there
 Was with thee; she, who loved us both, she still
 Was with thee; and even so didst thou become
 A silent Poet: from the solitude
 Of the vast sea didst bring a watchful heart
 Still couchant, an inevitable ear,
 And an eye practised like a blind man's touch.
 —Back to the joyless Ocean thou art gone:
 Nor from this vestige of thy musing hours
 Could I withhold thy honoured name,—and now
 I love the fir-grove with a perfect love.
 Thither do I withdraw when cloudless suns
 Shine hot, or wind blows troublesome and strong
 And there I sit at evening, when the steen
 Of Silver-how, and Grasmere's peaceful lake,
 And one green island, gleam between the stems
 Of the dark firs, a visionary scene!
 And, while I gaze upon the spectacle
 Of clouded splendour, on this dream-like sight
 Of solemn loveliness, I think on thee,
 My Brother, and on all which thou hast lost.

Nor seldom, if I rightly guess, while
 Thou,
 Muttering the verses which I muttered
 first
 Among the mountains, through the
 midnight watch
 Art pacing thoughtfully the vessel's
 deck
 In some far region, here, while o'er
 my head,
 At every impulse of the moving breeze,
 The fir-grove murmurs with a sea-like
 sound,
 Alone I tread this path;—for aught I
 know,
 Timing my steps to thine; and, with a
 store
 Of undistinguishable sympathies,
 Mingling most earnest wishes for the day
 When we, and others whom we love,
 shall meet
 A second time, in Grasmere's happy
 Vale.

1805.

Note.—This wish was not granted; the
 lamented Person not long after perished by
 shipwreck, in discharge of his duty as Com-
 mander of the Honourable East India Com-
 pany's Vessel, the Earl of Abergavenny.

FORTH from a jutting ridge, around
 whose base
 Winds our deep Vale, two heath-clad
 Rocks ascend
 In fellowship, the loftiest of the pair
 Rising to no ambitious height: yet
 both,

O'er lake and stream, mountain and
 flowery mead,
 Unfolding prospects fair as human eyes
 Ever beheld. Up-led with mutual help,
 To one or other brow of those twin
 Peaks
 Were two adventurous Sisters wont
 to climb,
 And took no note of the hour while
 thence they gazed,
 The blooming heath their couch, gazed,
 side by side.
 In speechless admiration. I, a witness
 And frequent sharer of their calm de-
 light
 With thankful heart, to either Emi-
 nence
 Gave the baptismal name each Sister
 bore.
 Now are they parted, far as Death's
 cold hand
 Hath power to part the spirits of those
 who love
 As they did love. Ye kindred Pin-
 nacles—
 That, while the generations of mankind
 Follow each other to their hiding-place
 In time's abyss, are privileged to endure
 Beautiful in yourselves, and richly
 graced
 With like command of beauty—grant
 your aid
 For MARY's humble, SARAH's silent,
 claim,
 That their pure joy in nature may sur-
 vive
 From age to age in blended memory.

1845.

POEMS OF THE FANCY

A MORNING EXERCISE

FANCY, who leads the pastimes of the
 glad,
 Full oft is pleased a wayward dart to
 throw;
 Sending sad shadows after things not sad.
 Peopling the harmless fields with signs
 of woe:
 Beneath her sway, a simple forest cry
 Becomes an echo of man's misery.
 Blithe ravens croak of death; and
 when the owl
 Tries his two voices for a favourite
 strain—
Tu-whit—Tu-whoo! the unsuspecting
 fowl
 Forebodes mishap or seems but to com-
 plain:
 Fancy, intent to harass and annoy,
 Can thus pervert the evidence of joy.

Through border wilds where naked
 Indians stray,
 Myriads of notes attest her subtle skill;
 A feathered task-master cries, "WORK,
 AWAY!"
 And, in thy iteration, "WHIP POOR
 WILL!"
 Is heard the spirit of a toil-worn slave,
 Lashed out of life, not quiet in the grave.

What wonder? at her bidding, ancient
 lays
 Steeped in dire grief the voice of Philo-
 And that fleet messenger of summer days,
 The Swallow, twittered subject to like
 spell;
 But ne'er could Fancy bend the buoyant
 Lark
 To melancholy service—hark! O hark!

1 See Waterton's wanderings in South America.

The daisy sleeps upon the dewy lawn,
Not lifting yet the head that evening
bowed ;

But *He* is wiser, a later star of dawn,
Glittering and twinkling near yon rosy
cloud ;
Bright gem instinct with music, vocal
a spark ;
The happiest bird that sprang out of
the Ark !

Hail, blest above all kinds !—Super-
premiely skilled
Restless with fixed to balance, high
with low,
Thou leav'st the halcyon free her hopes
to build
On such forbearance as the deep may
show ;

Perpetual flight, unchecked by earthly
ties,
Leav'st to the wandering bird of paradise.
Faithful, though swift as lightning,
the meek dove ;

Yet more hath nature reconciled in thee ;
So constant with thy downward eye of
love,

Yet, in aerial singleness, so free :
So humble, yet so ready to rejoice
In power of wing and never-wearied
voice.

To the last point of vision, and beyond,
Mount, daring warbler !—that love-
prompted strain,
(Twixt thee and thine a never-failing
bond)

Thrills not the less the bosom of the plain:
Yet might'st thou seem, proud privilege !
to sing

All independent of the leafy spring.

How would it please old Ocean to
partake,
With sailors longing for a breeze in vain,
The harmony thy notes most gladly
make

Where earth resembles most his own
domain !

Urania's self might welcome with pleased
ear,

These matins mounting towards her
native sphere.

Chanter by heayen attracted, whom
no bars
To day-light known deter from that
pursuit,

'Tis well that some sage instinct, when
the stars

Come forth at evening, keeps Thee still
and mute ;

For not an eyelid could to sleep incline
Wert thou among them, singing as they
shine !

1828.

II.

A FLOWER-GARDEN,

AT COLEORTON HALL, LEICESTERSHIRE

TELL me, ye Zephyrs ! that unfold,
While fluttering o'er this gay Recess,
Pinions that fanned the teeming mould
Of Eden's blissful wilderness,
Did only softly stealing hours
There close the peaceful lives of flowers ?

Say, when the moving creatures saw
All kinds commingled without fear,
Prevailed a like indulgent law
For the still growths that prosper here ?
Did wanton-fawn and kid forbear
The half-blown rose, the lily spare ?

Or peeped they often from their beds
And prematurely disappeared,
Devoured like pleasure ere it spreads
A bosom to the sun endeared ?
If such their harsh untimely doom,
It falls not *here* on bud or bloom.

All summer-long the happy Eve
Of this fair spot her flowers may bind,
Nor e'er, with ruffled fancy, grieve.
From the next glance she casts, to find
That love for little things by Fate
Is rendered vain as love for great.

Yet, where the guardian fence is wound,
So subtly are our eyes beguiled
We see not nor suspect a bound.
No more than in some forest wild ;
The sight is free as air—or crost
Only by art in nature lost.

And, though the jealous turf refuse
By random footsteps to be prest,
And feed on never-sullied dews,
Ye, gentle breezes from the west,
With all the ministers of hope
Are tempted to this sunny slope !

And hither throngs of birds resort ;
Some, inmates lodged in shady nests,
Some, perched on stems of stately port
That nod to welcome transient guests ;
While hare and leveret, seen at play,
Appear not more shut out than they.

Apt emblem (for reproof of pride)
This delicate Enclosure shows
Of modest kindness, that would hide
The firm protection she bestows ;
Of manners, like its viewless fence,
Ensuring peace to innocence.

Thus spake the moral Muse—her wing
Abruptly spreading to depart,
She left that farewell offering,
Memento for some docile heart ;
That may respect the good old age
When Fancy was Truth's willing Page ;

And Truth would skim the flowery glade.
Though entering but as fancy's Shade.
1824.

III

A WHIRL-BLAST from behind the hill
Rushed o'er the wood with startling
sound ;
Then—all at once the air was still.
And showers of hailstones pattered
round.

Where leafless oaks towered high above,
I sat within an undergrove
Of tallest hollies, tall and green ;
A fairer bower was never seen.
From year to year the spacious floor
With withered leaves is covered o'er.
And all the year the bower is green.
But see ! where'er the hailstones drop
The withered leaves all skip and hop ;
There's not a breeze - no breath of air—
Yet here, and there, and everywhere
Along the floor, beneath the shade
By those embowering hollies made,
The leaves in myriads jump and spring,
As if with pipes and music rare
Some Robin Good-fellow were there,
And all those leaves, in festive glee,
Were dancing to the minstrelsy.

1799.

IV

THE WATERFALL AND
THE EGLANTINE

I

" BEGONE, thou fond presumptuous
Elf,"

Exclaimed an angry Voice,
" Nor dare to thrust thy foolish self
Between me and my choice ! "

A small Cascade fresh swollen with snows
Thus threatened a poor Briar-rose,
That, all bespattered with his foam,
And dancing high and dancing low,
Was living, as a child might know,
In an unhappy home,

II

" Dost thou presume my course to block ?
Off, off ! or, puny Thing !
I'll hurl thee headlong with the rock
To which thy fibres cling."
The Flood was tyrannous and strong ;
The patient Briar suffered long,
Nor did he utter groan or sigh,
Hoping the danger would be past ;
But, seeing no relief, at last,
He ventured to reply.

III

" Ah ! " said the Briar, " blame me not ;
Why should we dwell in strife ?

We who in this sequestered spot
Once lived a happy life !

You stirred me on my rocky bed—
What pleasure through my veins you
spread

The summer long, from day to day,
My leaves you freshened and bedewed ;
Nor was it common gratitude
That did your cares repay.

IV

When spring came on with bud and bell,
Among these rocks did I
Before you hang my wreaths to tell,
That gentle days were nigh !
And in the sultry summer hours,
I sheltered you with leaves and flowers ;
And in my leaves—now shed and gone,
The linnet lodged, and for us two
Charmed his pretty songs, when you
Had little voice or none.

V

But now proud thoughts are in your
breast—

What grief is mine you see,
Ah ! would you think, even yet how blest
Together we might be !
Though of both leaf and flower bereft,
Some ornaments to be are left—
Rich store of scarlet hips is mine,
With which I, in my humble way,
Would deck you many a winter day,
A happy Eglantine ! "

VI

What more he said I cannot tell,
The Torrent down the rocky dell
Came thundering loud and fast ;
I listened, nor aught else could hear ;
The Briar quaked—and much I fear
Those accents were his last.

1800.

V

THE OAK AND THE BROOM

A PASTORAL

I

His simple truths did Andrew glean,
Beside the babbling rills ;
A careful student he had been
Among the woods and hills.
One winter's night, when through the
trees
The wind was roaring, on his knees
His youngest born did Andrew hold :
And while the rest, a ruddy quire,
Were seated round their blazing fire,
This Tale the Shepherd told.

II

" I saw a crag, a lofty stone
As ever tempest beat ! "

Out of its head an Oak had grown,
A Broom out of its feet.
The time was March, a cheerful noon—
The thaw-wind with the breath of June,
Breathed gently from the warm south-
west:

When, in a voice sedate with age,
This Oak, a giant and a sage,
His neighbour thus addressed:—

III

'Eight weary weeks, through rock and
clay,
Along this mountain's edge,
The Frost hath wrought both night and
day,
Wedge driving after wedge.
Look up! and think, above your head
What trouble, surely, will be bred;
Last night I heard a crash—'tis true,
The ~~s~~inters took another road—
I ~~se~~ them wonder—what a load
For such a Thing as you!

IV

You are preparing as before,
To deck your slender shape:
And yet, just three years back—no
more—
You had a strange escape:
Down from yon cliff a fragment broke;
It thundered down, with fire and smoke,
And hitherward pursued its way;
This ponderous block was caught by me,
And o'er your head, as you may see,
'Tis hanging to this day!

V

If breeze or bird to this rough steep
Your kind's first seed did bear;
The breeze had better been asleep,
The bird caught in a snare:
For you and your green twigs decoy
The little witless shepherd-boy
To come and slumber in your bower;
And, trust me, on some sultry noon,
Both you and he, Heaven knows how
soon!
Will perish in one hour.

VI

From ~~me~~ this friendly warning take—
The Broom began to doze,
And thus, to keep herself awake,
I did gently interpose:
'My thanks for your discourse are due;
That more than what you say is true,
I know, and I have known it long;
Frail is the bond by which we hold
Our being, whether young or old,
Weak, foolish, weak, or strong.

VII

Disasters, do the best we can,
Will reach both great and small;

And he is oft the wisest man,
Who is not wise at all.
For me, why should I wish to roam?
This spot is my paternal home,
It is my pleasant heritage;
My father many a happy year,
Spread here his careless blossoms, here
Attained a good old age.

VIII

Even such as his may be my lot.
What cause have I to haunt
My heart with terrors? Am I not
In truth a favoured plant!
O! me such bounty Summer pours,
That I am covered o'er with flowers;
And, when the Frost is in the sky,
My branches are so fresh and gay
That you might look at me and say,
This Plant can never die.

IX

The butterfly, all green and gold,
To me hath often flown,
Here in my blossoms to behold
Wings lovely as his own.
When grass is chill with rain or dew,
Beneath my shade, the mother-ewe
Lies with her infant lamb; I see
The love they to each other make,
And the sweet joy which they partake;
It is a joy to me.

X

Her voice was blithe, her heart was light—
The Broom might have pursued
Her speech, until the stars of night
Their journey had renewed;
But in the branches of the oak
Two ravens now began to croak
Their nuptial song, a glad some air;
And to her own green bower the breeze
That instant brought two stripling bees
To rest, or murmur there.

XI

One night, my Children! from the north
There came a furious blast;
At break of day I ventured forth,
And near the cliff I passed.
The storm had fallen upon the Oak,
And struck him with a mighty stroke,
And whirled, and whirled him far away;
And, in one hospitable cleft,
The little careless Broom was left
To live for many a day."

1800.

VI

TO A SEXTON

Let thy wheel-barrow alone—
Wherefore, Sexton, piling still!
In thy bone-house, bone on bone?
'Tis already like a hill

In a field of battle made,
Where three thousand skulls are laid ;
These died in peace each with the other,—
Father, sister, friend, and brother.

Mark the spot to which I point !
From this platform, eight feet square,
Take not even a finger-joint :
Andrew's whole fire-side is there.
Here, alone, before thine eyes,
Simon's sickly daughter lies,
From weakness now, and pain defended.
Whom he twenty winters tended.

Look but at the gardener's pride—
How he glories, when he sees
Roses, lilies, side by side,
Violets in families !
By the heart of Man, his tears,
By his hopes and by his fears,
Thou, too heedless, art the Warden
Of a far superior garden.

Thus then, each to other dear,
Let them all in quiet lie,
Andrew there, and Susan here,
Neighbours in mortality.
And, should I live through sun and rain
Seven widowed years without my Jane,
O Sexton, do not then remove her,
Let one grave hold the Loved and Lover !

1799.

VII

TO THE DAISY

" Her¹ divine skill taught me this,
That from every thing I saw
I could some instruction draw,
And raise pleasure to the height
Through the meanest object's sight.
By the murmur of a spring,
Or the least bough's rustelling ;
By a Daisy whose leaves spread
Shut when Titan goes to bed ;
Or a shady bush or tree ;
She could more infuse in me
Than all Nature's beauties can
In some other wiser man."

G. WITHER.

IN youth from rock to rock I went,
From hill to hill in discontent
Of pleasure high and turbulent,
Most pleased when most uneasy ;
But now my own delights I make,—
My thirst at every rill can slake,
And gladly Nature's love partake,
Of Thee, sweet Daisy !

Thou Winter in the garland wears
That thinly decks his few grey hairs ;
Spring parts the clouds with softest airs,
That she may sun thee ;
Whole Summer-fields are thine by right ;

¹ His muse.

And Autumn, melancholy Wight !
Doth in thy crimson head delight
When rains are on thee.

In shoals and bands, a morrice train,
Thou greet'st the traveller in the lane ;
Pleased at his greeting thee again ;
Yet nothing daunted,
Nor grieved if thou be set at nought ;
And oft alone in nooks remote
We meet thee, like a pleasant thought,
When such are wanted.

Be violets in their secret mews
The flowers the wapon Zephyrs choose ;
Proud be the rose, with rains and dews
Her head impearling,
Thou liv'st with less ambitious aim.
Yet hast, not gone without thy fame ;
Thou art indeed by many a claim
The Poet's darling.

If to a rock from rains he lay,
Or, some bright day of April sky,
Imprisoned by hot sunshine lie
Near the green holly,
And wearily at length should fare ;
He needs but look about, and there
Thou art !—a friend at hand, to scare
His melancholy.

A hundred times by rock or bower,
Ere thus I have lain couched an hour,
Have I derived from thy sweet power
Some apprehension ;
Some steady love ; some brief delight ;
Some memory that had taken flight ;
Some chime of fancy wrong or right ;
Or stray invention.

If stately passions in me burn,
And one chance look to Thee should turn,
I drink out of an humbler urn
A lowlier pleasure ;
The homely sympathy that heeds
The common life, our nature breeds ;
A wisdom fitted to the needs
Of hearts at leisure.

Fresh-smitten by the morning ray,
When thou art up, alert and gay,
Then, cheerful Flower ! my spirits play
With kindred gladness :
And when, at dusk, by dews oppress
Thou sink'st, the image of thy rest
Hath often eased my pensive breast
Of careful sadness.

And all day long I number yet,
All seasons through, another debt,
Which I, wherever thou art met,
To thee am owing ;
An instinct call it, a blind sense ;
A happy, genial influence,
Coming one knows not how, nor whence,
Nor whither going.

Child of the Year! that round dost run
Thy pleasant course,—when day's begun
As ready to salute the sun
As lark or leveret,
Thy long-lost praise thou shalt regain;
Nor be less dear to future men
Than in old time;—thou not in vain
Art Nature's favourite!

1802.

VIII.

TO THE SAME FLOWER

With little here to do or see
Of things that in the great world be,
Daisy! again I talk to thee.
For thou art worthy,
Thou unassuming Common-place
Of Nature, with that homely face,
And with something of a grace,
Which ~~alone~~ makes for thee!

Of on the dappled turf at ease
I sit, and play with similes,
Loose types of things through all degrees,
Thoughts of thy raising:

And many a fond and idle name
I give to thee, for praise or blame,
As is the humour of the game,
While I am gazing.

A nun demure of lowly port;
Or sprightly maiden, of Love's court,
In thy simplicity the sport

Of all temptations:
A queen in crown of rubies drest;
A starveling in a scanty vest;
Are all, as seems to suit thee best,
Thy appellations.

A little cyclops, with one eye
Staring to threaten and defy,
That thought comes next—and instantly

The freak is over,
The shape will vanish—and behold
A silver shield with boss of gold,
That spreads itself, some faery bold
In fight to cover!

I see thee glittering from afar—
And thou art a pretty star;
Not quite so fair as many are
In heaven above thee!

Yet like a star, with glittering crest,
Self-poised in air thou seem'st to rest;
May peace come never to his nest,
Who shall reprove thee!

Bright Flower! for by that name at last,
When all my reveries are past,
I call thee, and to that cleave fast,
Sweet silent creature!

¹ See, in Chaucer and the elder Poets, the
honours formerly paid to this flower.

W.F.

That breath'st with me in sun and air,
Do thou, as thou art wont, repair
My heart with gladness, and a share
Of thy meek nature!

1805.

IX

THE GREEN LINNET

BENEATH these fruit-tree boughs that shed
Their snow-white blossoms on my head,
With brightest sunshine round me spread

Of spring's unclouded weather,
In this sequestered nook how sweet
To sit upon my orchard-seat!
And birds and flowers once more to greet,
My last year's friends together.

One have I marked, the happiest guest
In all this covert of the blest:
Hail to thee, far above the rest

In joy of voice and pinion!
Thou, Linnet! in thy green array,
Presiding Spirit here to-day,
Dost lead the revels of the May;
And this is thy dominion.

While birds, and butterflies, and flowers,
Make all one band of paramours,
Thou, ranging up and down the bowers,

Art sole in thy employment:
A Life, a Presence like the Air,
Scattering thy gladness without care,
Too blest with any one to pair;
Thyself thy own enjoyment.

Amid yon tuft of hazel trees,
That twinkle to the gusty breeze,
Behold him perched in ecstasies,
Yet seeming still to hover;

There! where the flutter of his wings
Upon his back and body flings
Shadows and sunny glimmerings,
That cover him all over.

My dazzled sight he oft deceives,
A Brother of the dancing leaves;
Then sits, and from the cottage-eaves
Pours forth his song in gushes;

As if by that exulting strain
He mocked and treated with disdain
The voiceless Form he chose to feign,
While fluttering in the bushes.

1803.

X

TO A SKY-LARK

Up with me! up with me into the
clouds!

For thy song, Lark, is strong;
Up with me, up with me into the clouds!
Singing, singing,

With clouds and sky about thee ringing,
Lift me, guide me till I find
That spot which seems so to thy mind!

K

I have walked through wildernesses dreary
 And to-day my heart is weary;
 Had I now the wings of a Faery,
 Up to thee would I fly.
 There is madness about thee, and joy divine
 In that song of thine;
 Lift me, guide me high and high
 To thy banqueting-place in the sky.

Joyous as morning,
 Thou art laughing and scorning;
 Thou hast a nest for thy love and thy rest,

And, though little troubled with sloth,
 Drunken Lark! thou would'st be loth
 To be such a traveller as I.

Happy, happy Liver,
 With a soul as strong as a mountain river

Pouring out praise to the almighty Giver,

Joy and jollity be with us both!

Alas! my journey, rugged and uneven,
 Through prickly moors or dusty ways must wind;

But hearing thee, or others of thy kind,
 As full of gladness and as free of heaven,
 I, with my fate contented, will plod on,
 And hope for higher raptures, when
 life's day is done.

1805.

XI

TO THE SMALL CELANDINE¹

PANSIES, lilies, kingcups, daisies,
 Let them live upon their praises;
 Long as there's a sun that sets,
 Primroses will have their glory;
 Long as there are violets,
 They will have a place in story:
 There's a flower that shall be mine,
 'Tis the little Celandine.

Eyes of some men travel far
 For the finding of a star;
 Up and down the heavens they go.
 Men that keep a mighty row!
 I'm as great as they, I trow,
 Since the day I found thee out.
 Little Flower!—I'll make a stir,
 Like a sage astronomer.

Modest, yet withal an Elf
 Bold, and lavish of thyself;
 Since we needs must first have met
 I have seen thee, high and low.
 Thirty years or more, and yet
 'Twas a face I did not know;
 Thou hast now, go where I may,
 Fifty greetings in a day.

¹ Common Pilewort.

Eye a leaf is on a bush,
 In the time before the thrush
 Has a thought about her nest,
 Thou wilt come with half a call,
 Spreading out thy glossy breast
 Like a careless Prodigal;
 Telling tales about the sun,
 When we've little warmth, or none.

Poets, vain men in their mood!
 Travel with the multitude:
 Never heed them; I aver
 That they all are wanton wooers;
 But the thrifty cottager,
 Who stirs little out of doors,
 Joys to spy thee near her home:
 Spring is coming, Thou art come!

Comfort have thou of thy merit,
 Kind! unassuming Spirit!
 Careless of thy neighbourhood,
 Thou dost show thy pleasant face
 On the moor, and in the wood,
 In the lane;—there's not a place,
 Howsoever mean it be,
 But 'tis good enough for thee.

Ill befall the yellow flowers,
 Children of the flaring hours!
 Buttercups, that will be seen,
 Whether we will see or no:
 Others, too, of lofty mien;
 They have done as worldlings do,
 Taken praise that should be thine,
 Little, humble Celandine!

Prophet of delight and mirth,
 Ill-requited upon earth;
 Herald of a mighty hand,
 Of a joyous train ensuing,
 Serving at my heart's command,
 Tasks that are no tasks renewing,
 I will sing, as doth behove,
 Hymns in praise of what I love!

1803.

XII

TO THE SAME FLOWER

PLEASURES newly found are sweet
 When they lie about our feet:
 February last, my heart
 First at sight of thee was glad;
 All unheard of as thou art,
 Thou must needs, I think, have had,
 Celandine! and long ago,
 Praise of which I nothing know.

I have not a doubt but he,
 Whoso'er the man might be,
 Who the first with pointed rays
 (Workman worthy to be sainted)
 Set the sign-board in a blaze,
 When the rising sun he painted,
 Took the fancy from a glance
 At thy glittering countenance.

Soon as gentle breezes bring
 News of winter's vanishing,
 And the children build their bowers,
 Sticking kerchief-plots of mould
 All about with full-blown flowers,
 Thick as sheep in shepherd's fold !
 With the proudest thou art there,
 Mantling in the tiny square.

Often have I sighed to measure
 By myself a lonely pleasure,
 Sighed to think, I read a book
 Only read, perhaps, by me ;
 Yet I long could overlook
 Thy bright coronet and Thee,
 And thy arch and wily ways,
 And thy store of other praise.

Blithe of heart, from week to week
 Thou dost play at hide-and-seek
 While the patient primrose sits
 Like a warrior in the cold.
 Thou, a flower of wiser wits,
 Slip'st into thy sheltering hold ;
 Liveliest of the vernal train
 When ye all are out again.

Drawn by what peculiar spell,
 By what charm of sight or smell,
 Does the dim-eyed curious Bee,
 Labouring for her waxen cells,
 Fondly settle upon Thee.
 Prized above all huds and bells
 Opening daily at thy side,
 By the season multiplied !

Thou art not beyond the moon,
 But a thing "beneath our shoon :"
 Let the bold Discoverer thrid
 In his bark the polar sea ;
 Rear who will a pyramid ;
 Praise it is enough for me,
 If there be but three or four
 Who will love my little Flower.

1803.

XIII

THE SEVEN SISTERS ;

OR, THE SOLITUDE OF BINNORIE

I

SEVEN Daughters had Lord Archibald,
 All children of one mother :
 You could not say in one short day
 What love they bore each other,
 A garland, of seven lilies, wrought !
 Seven Sisters that together dwell ;
 But he, bold Knight as ever fought,
 Their Father, took of them no thought,
 He loved the wars so well.
 Sing, mournfully, oh ! mournfully,
 The solitude of Binnorie !

II

Fresh blows the wind, a western wind,
 And from the shores of Erin,
 Across the wave, a Rover brave

To Binnorie is steering :
 Right onward to the Scottish strand
 The gallant ship is borne ;
 The warriors leap upon the land,
 And hark ! the Leader of the band
 Hath blown his bugle horn.
 Sing, mournfully, oh ! mournfully,
 The solitude of Binnorie.

III

Beside a grotto of their own,
 With boughs above them closing,
 The Seven are laid, and in the shade
 They lie like fawns reposing.
 But now, upstarting with affright
 At noise of man and steed,
 Away they fly to left, to right—
 Of your fair household, Father-knight,
 Methinks you take small heed !
 Sing, mournfully, oh ! mournfully,
 The solitude of Binnorie.

IV

Away the seven fair Campbells fly,
 And, over hill and hollow,
 With menace proud, and insult loud,
 The youthful Rovers follow.
 Cried they, "Your Father loves to roam ;
 Enough for him to find
 The empty house when he comes home ;
 For us your yellow ringlets comb,
 For us be fair and kind !"
 Sing, mournfully, oh ! mournfully,
 The solitude of Binnorie.

V

Some close behind, some side by side,
 Like clouds in stormy weather ;
 They run, and cry, "Nay, let us die,
 And let us die together."
 A lake was near : the shore was steep ;
 There never foot had been ;
 They ran, and with a desperate leap
 Together plunged into the deep,
 Nor ever more were seen.
 Sing, mournfully, oh ! mournfully,
 The solitude of Binnorie.

VI

The stream that flows out of the lake,
 As through the glen it rambles,
 Repeats a moan o'er moss and stone,
 For those seven lovely Campbells.
 Seven little Islands, green and bare,
 Have risen from out the deep :
 The fishers say, those sisters fair,
 By faeries all are buried there,
 And there together sleep.
 Sing, mournfully, oh ! mournfully,
 The solitude of Binnorie.

1804.

XIV

Who fancied what a pretty sight
 This Rock would be if edged around

With living snow-drops ? circle bright !
How glorious to this orchard-ground !
Who loved the little Rock, and set
Upon its head this coronet ?

Was it the humour of a child ?
Or rather of some gentle maid,
Whose brows, the day that she was styled
The shepherd-queen, were thus arrayed ?
Of man mature, or matron sage ?
Or old man toying with his age !

I asked—'twas whispered ; The device
To each and all might well belong :
It is the spirit of Paradise
That prompts such work, a Spirit strong,
That gives to all the self-same bent
Where life is wise and innocent.

1803.

XV

THE REDBREAST CHASING THE BUTTERFLY

Art thou the bird whom Man loves best,
The pious bird with the scarlet breast,
Our little English Robin ;
The bird that comes about our doors
When Autumn-winds are sobbing ?
Art thou the Peter of Norway Boors ?
Their Thomas in Finland,
And Russia far inland ?
The bird, that by some name or other
All men who know thee call their
brother,

The darling of children and men ?
Could Father Adam¹ open his eyes
And see this sight beneath the skies,
He'd wish to close them again.
—If the Butterfly knew but his friend,
Hither his flight he would bend ;
And find his way to me.
Under the branches of the tree :
In and out, he darts about ;
Can this be the bird, to man so good
That, after their bewildering,
Covered, with leaves the little children,
So painfully in the wood ?

What ailed thee, Robin, that thou
could'st pursue
A beautiful creature,
That is gentle by nature ?
Beneath the summer sky
From flower to flower let him fly ;
'Tis all that he wishes to do.
The cheerer Thou of our in-door sad-
ness,
He is the friend of our summer gladness :
What hinders, then, that ye should be

¹ See *Paradise Lost*, Book XI., where Adam points out to Eve the ominous sign of the Eagle chasing "two Birds of gayest plume," and the gentle Hart and Hind pursued by their enemy.

Playmates in the sunny weather,
And fly about in the air together !
His beautiful wings in crimson are drest,
A crimson as bright as thine own :
Would'st thou be happy in thy nest,
O pious Bird ! whom man loves best,
Love him, or leave him alone !

1806.

XVI

SONG FOR THE SPINNING WHEEL
FOUNDED UPON A BELIEF PREVALENT
AMONG THE PASTORAL VILES OF
WESTMORELAND

Swiftly turn the murmuring wheel !
Night has brought the welcome hour,
When the weary fingers feel
Help, as if from faery power ;
Dewy night o'ershades the ground ;
Turn the swift wheel round and round !

Now, beneath the starry sky,
Couch the widely-scattered sheep ;—
Ply the pleasant labour, ply !
For the spindle, while they sleep,
Runs with speed more smooth and fine,
Gathering up a trustier line.

Short-lived likings may be bred
By a glance from fickle eyes ;
But true love is like the thread
Which the kindly wool supplies,
When the flocks are all at rest
Sleeping on the mountain's breast.

1812.

XVII

HINT FROM THE MOUNTAINS

FOR CERTAIN POLITICAL PRETENDERS

"Who but hails the sight with pleasure
When the wings of genius rise,
Their ability to measure
With great enterprise ;
But in man was ne'er such daring
As yon Hawk exhibits, pairing
His brave spirit with the war in
The stormy skies !

Mark him, how his power he uses,
Lays it by, at will resumes !
Mark, ere for his haunt he chooses
Clouds and utter glooms !
There, he wheels in downward mazes ;
Steward now his flight he raises,
Catches fire, as seems, and flazes
With uninjured plumes !"—

ANSWER

"Stranger, 'tis no act of courage
Which aloft thou dost discern ;
No bold bird gone forth to forage
'Mid the tempest stern ;
But such mockery as the raptions
See, when public perturbations

Lift men from their native stations,
Like yon Tuft of Fern ;

Such it is, the aspiring creature
Soaring on undaunted wing,
(So you fancied) is by nature
A dull helpless thing,
Dry and withered, light and yellow ;—
That to be the tempest's fellow !
Wait—and you shall see how hollow
Its endeavouring !”

817.

XVIII

ON SEEING A NEEDLECASE IN THE FORM OF A HARP

THE WORK OF E. M. S.

Thorns are on every Muse's face,
Arrows from their lips are sent,
That mockery should thus disgrace
The noble instrument.

A very Harp in all but size !
Needles for Strings in apt gradation :
Minerva's self would stigmatize
The unclassic profanation.

Even her own needle that subdued
Arachne's rival spirit,
Thought wrought in Vulcan's happiest
mood,
Such honour could not merit.

And this, too, from the Laureate's
Child,

A living lord of melody !
How will her Sire be reconciled
To the refined indignity ?

I spake, when whispered a low voice,
“Bard ! moderate your ire ;
Spirits of all degrees rejoice
In presence of the lyre.”

The Minstrels of Pygmean bands,
Dwarf Genii, moonlight-loving Fays,
Have shells to fit their tiny hands
And suit their slender lays.

Some, still more delicate of ear,
Have lutes (believe my words)
Whose framework is of gossamer,
While sunbeams are the chords.

Gay Sylphs this miniature will court,
Made vocal by their brushing wings,
And sullen Gnomes will learn to sport
Around its polished strings ;

Whence strains to love-sick maiden dear,
While in her lonely bower she tries
To cheat the thought she cannot cheer,
By fanciful embroideries.

Trust, angry Bard ! a knowing Sprite,
Nor think the Harp her lot depletes ;

Though 'mid the stars the Lyre shine
Bright,
Love stoops as fondly as he soars.”

1827.

XIX

TO A LADY,

IN ANSWER TO A REQUEST THAT I WOULD
WRITE HER A POEM UPON SOME
DRAWINGS THAT SHE HAD MADE OF
FLOWERS IN THE ISLAND OF
MADEIRA

FAIR Lady ! can I sing of flowers
That in Madeira bloom and fade,
I who ne'er sate within their bowers.
Nor through their sunny lawns have
strayed ?

How they in sprightly dance are worn
By Shepherd-groom or May-day
queen,

Or holy festal pomps adorn,
These eyes have never seen.

Yet tho' to me the pencil's art
No like remembrances can give,
Your portraits still may reach the heart
And there for gentle pleasure live :
While Fancy ranging with free scope
Shall on some lovely Alien set
A name with us endeared to hope,
To peace, or fond regret.

Still as we look with nicer care,
Some new resemblance we may trace :
A *Heart's-ease* will perhaps be there,
A *Speedwell* may not want its place.
And so may we, with charmed mind
Beholding what your skill has wrought,
Another *Star-of-Bethlehem* find,
A new *Forget-me-not*.

From earth to heaven with motions fleet
From heaven to earth our thoughts
will pass,

A *Holy-thistle* here we meet
And there a *Shepherd's weather-glass* ;
And haply some familiar name
Shall grace the fairest, sweetest, plant
Whose presence cheers the drooping
frame
Of English Emigrant.

Gazing she feels its power beguile
Sad thoughts, and breathes with easier
breath ;

Alas ! that meek that tender smile
Is but a harbinger of death :
And pointing with a feeble hand,
She says, in faint words by sighs broken,
Bear for me to my native land
This precious Flower, true love's last
token.

XX

GLAD sight wherever new with old
Is joined through some dear homeborn
tie ;

The life of all that we behold
Depends upon that mystery.
Vain is the glory of the sky.
The beauty vain of field and grove
Unless, while with admiring eye
We gaze, we also learn to love.

XXI

THE CONTRAST

THE PARROT AND THE WREN

I

WITHIN her gilded cage confined,
I saw a dazzling Belle,
A Parrot of that famous kind
Whose name is NON-PAREIL.

Like beads of glossy jet her eyes ;
And, smoothed by Nature's skill,
With pearl or gleaming agate vies
Her finely-curved bill.

Her plumy mantle's living hues
In mass opposed to mass,
Outshine the splendour that imbues
The robes of pictured glass.

And, sooth to say, an apter Mate
Did never tempt the choice
Of feathered Thing most delicate
In figure and in voice.

But, exiled from Australian bowers,
And singleness her lot,
She trills her song with tutored powers,
Or mocks each casual note.

No more of pity for regrets
With which she may have striven !
Now hut in wantonness she frets,
Or spite, if cause be given ;

Arch, volatile, a sportive bird
By social glee inspired ;
Ambitious to be seen or heard,
And pleased to be admired !

II

THIS MOSS-LINED shed, green, soft, and
dry,

Harbours a self-contented Wren,
Not shunning man's abode, though shy
Almost as thought itself, of human ken.

Strange places, coverts unendeared,
She never tried ; the very nest
In which this Child of Spring was
reared,

is warmed, thro' winter, by her feathery
breast.

To the bleak winds she sometimes gives
A slender unexpected strain ;

Proof that the hermitess still lives,
Though she appear not, and be sought
vain.

Say, Dora tell me, by yon placid moon,
If called to choose between the favoured
pair,

Which would you be,—the bird of the
saloon,

By lady-fingers tended with nice care,
Caressed, applauded, upon daunties fed,
Or Nature's DAWDLING of this mossy
shed ?

1825.

XXII

THE DANISH BOY

A FRAGMENT

I

BETWEEN two sister moorland dells
There is a spot that seems to lie
Sacred to flowerets of the hills,
And sacred to the sky.

And in this smooth and open dell
There is a tempest-stricken tree ;
A corner-stone by lightning cut,
The last stone of a lovely hut ;
And in this dell you see
A thing no storm can e'er destroy,
The shadow of a Danish Boy.

II

In clouds above, the lark is heard,
But drops not here to earth for rest ;
Within this lonesome nook the bird
Did never build her nest.
No beast, no bird hath here his home ;
Bees, waffed on the breezy air,
Pass high above those fragrant bells
To other flowers :—to other dells
Their burthens do they bear ;
The Danish Boy walks here alone :
The lovely dell is all his own.

III

A Spirit of noon-day is he ;
Yet seems a form of flesh and blood ;
Nor piping shepherd shall he be,
Nor herd-boy of the wood.
A regal vest of fur he wears,
In colour like a raven's wing ;
It fears not rain, nor wind, nor dew ;
But in the storm 'tis fresh and blue
As budding pines in spring ;
His helmet has a vernal grace,
Fresh as the bloom upon his face.

IV

A harp is from his shoulder slung ;
Resting the harp upon his knee ;
To words of a forgotten tongue,
He suits its melody.
Of flocks upon the neighbouring hill

He is the darling and the joy ;
 And often, when no cause appears,
 The mountain-ponies prick their ears,
 —They hear the Danish Boy,
 While in the dell he sings alone
 Beside the tree and corner-stone.

There sits he ; in his face you spy
 No trace of a ferocious air,
 Nor ever was a cloudless sky
 So steady or so fair.
 The lovely Danish Boy is blest
 And happy in his flowery cove :
 From bloody deeds his thoughts are far ;
 And yet he warbles songs of war,
 That seem like songs of love,
 For calm and gentle is his mien ;
 Like a dead Boy he is serene.

1799.

XXIII SONG

FOR THE WANDERING JEW

THOUGH the torrents from their fountains
 Roar down many a craggy steep,
 Yet they find among the mountains
 Resting-places calm and deep.

Clouds that love through air to hasten,
 Ere the storm its fury stills,
 Helmet-like themselves will fasten
 On the heads of towering hills.

What, if through the frozen centre
 Of the Alps the Chamois bound,
 Yet he has a home to enter
 In some nook of chosen ground :

And the Sea-horse, though the ocean
 Yield him no domestic cave,
 Slumbers without sense of motion,
 Couched upon the rocking wave.

If on windy days the Raven
 Gambol like a dancing skiff,
 Not the less she loves her haven
 In the bosom of the cliff.

The fleet Ostrich, till day closes,
 Vagrant over desert sands,
 Brooding on her eggs reposes
 When chill night that rare demands.

Day and night my toils redouble,
 Never nearer to the goal ;
 Night and day I feel the trouble
 Of the Wanderer in my soul.

1800.

XXIV STRAY PLEASURES

"—Pleasure is spread through the earth
 In stray gifts to be claimed by whoever shall find."

By their floating mill,
 That lies dead and still,

Behold yon Prisoners three,
 The Miller with two Dames, on the
 breast of the Thames !
 The platform is small, but gives room
 for them all ;
 And they're dancing merrily.

From the shore come the notes
 To their mill where it floats.
 To their house and their mill tethered
 fast :
 To the small wooden isle where, their
 work to beguile,
 They from morning to even take what-
 ever is given :—
 And many a blithe day they have past.

In sight of the spires,
 All alive with the fires
 Of the sun going down to his rest.
 In the broad open eye of the solitary sky,
 They dance,—there are three, as jocund
 as free,
 While they dance on the calm river's
 breast.

Man and Maidens wheel,
 They themselves make the reel,
 And their music's a prey which they
 seize :
 It plays not for them,—what matter ?
 'tis theirs ;
 And if they had care, it has scattered
 their cares,
 While they dance, crying, " Long as ye
 please ! "

They dance not for me,
 Yet mine is their glee !
 Thus pleasure is spread through the earth
 In stray gifts to be claimed by whoever
 shall find :
 Thus a rich loving-kindness, redundantly
 kind,
 Moves all nature to gladness and mirth.

The showers of the spring
 Rouse the birds, and they sing ;
 If the wind do but stir for his proper
 delight,
 Each leaf, that and this, his neighbour
 will kiss :
 Each wave, one and t'other, speeds,
 after his brother :
 They are happy, for that is their right !

1806.

XXV

THE PILGRIM'S DREAM ;

OR, THE STAR AND THE GLOW-WORM
 A PILGRIM, when the summer day
 Had closed upon his weary way,
 A lodging begged beneath a castle's
 roof ;
 But him, the haughty Warder spurned ;

And from the gate the Pilgrim turned,
To seek such covert as the field
Or heath-besprinkled copse might yield,
Or lofty wood, shower-proof.

He paced along ; and, pensively,
Halting beneath a shady tree,
Whose moss-grown root might serve for
couch or seat.

Fixed on a Star his upward eye ;
Then, from the tenant of the sky
He turned, and watched with kindred
look,

A Glow-worm, in a dusky nook,
Apparent at his feet.

The murmur of a neighbouring stream
Induced a soft and slumbrous dream.
A pregnant dream, within whose sha-
dowy bounds

He recognised the earth-born Star.
And *That* which glittered from afar ;
And (strange to witness !) from the frame
Of the ethereal Orb, there came
Intelligible sounds.

Much did it taunt the humble Light
That now, when day was fled, and night
Hushed the dark earth, fast closing
weary eyes,

A very reptile could presume
To show her taper in the gloom,
As if in rivalry with One
Who sate a ruler on his throne
Erected in the skies.

" Exalted Star ! " the Worm replied,
" Abate this unbecoming pride,
Or with a less uneasy lustre shine ;
Thou shrink'st as momentarily thy rays
Are mastered by the breathing haze ;
While neither mist, nor thickest cloud
That shapes in heaven its murky shroud,
Hath power to injure mine.

But not for this do I aspire
To match the spark of local fire,
That at my will burns on the dewy lawn.
With thy acknowledged glories ;—No !
Yet, thus upbraided, I may show
What favours do attend me here,
Till, like thyself, I disappear
Before the purple dawn."

When this in modest guise was said,
Across the welkin seemed to spread
A bodding sound—for aught but sleep
unfit !

Hills quaked, the rivers backward ran ;
That Star, so proud of late, looked wan ;
And reeled with visionary stir
In the blue depth, like Lucifer
Cast headlong to the pit !

Fire raged ; and, when the spangled floor
Of ancient ether was no more,

New heavens succeeded, by the dream
brought forth :

And all the happy souls that rode
Transfigured through that fresh abode,
Had heretofore, in humble trust,
Shone meekly mid their native dust,
The Glow-worms of the earth !

This knowledge, from an Angel's voice
Proceeding, made the heart rejoice
Of Him who slept upon the open lay :
Waking at morn he murmured not ;
And, till life's journey closed, the spot
Was to the Pilgrim's soul endeared,
Where by that dream he had been cheered
Beneath the shady tree.

1818.

XXVI

THE POET AND THE CAGE
TURTLEDOVE

As often as I murmur here,
My half-formed melody,
Straight from her osier mansion near,
The Turtledove replies :
Though silent as a leaf before,
The captive promptly coos ;
Is it to teach her own soft lore,
Or second my weak Muse ?

I rather think, the gentle Dove "
Is murmuring a reproof,
Displeased that I from lays of love
Have dared to keep aloof ;
That I, a Bard of hill and dale,
Have caroll'd, fancy free,
As if nor dove nor nightingale,
Had heart or voice for me.

If such thy meaning, O forbear,
Sweet Bird ! to do me wrong ;
Love, blessed Love, is every where
The spirit of my song :
'Mid grove, and by the calm fireside,
Love animates my lyre—
That coo again !—'tis not to chide,
I feel, but to inspire.

1830.

XXVII

A WREN'S NEST

AMONG the dwellings framed by birds
In field or forest with nice care.
If none that with the little Wren's
In snugness may compare.

No door the tenement requires,
And seldom needs a laboured roof.
Yet is it to the fiercest sun
Impervious, and storm-proof.

So warm, so beautiful withal,
In perfect fitness for its aim,
That to the Kind by special grace
Their instinct surely came.

And when for their abodes they seek
An opportune recess,
The hermit has no finer eye
For shadowy quietness.

These find, 'mid ivied abbey-walls,
A canopy in some still nook ;
Others are pent-housed by a brap
That overhangs a brook.

There to the brooding bird her mate
Wartles by fits his love clear song ;
And by the busy streamlet both
Are sung to all day long.

Or in sequestered lanes they build,
Where, till the flitting bird's return,
Her eggs within the nest repose,
Like relics in an urn.

But still, where general choice is good,
There is a better and a best ;
And, among fairest objects, some
Are fairer than the rest ;

This, one of these small builders proved
In a green covert, where, from out
The forehead of a pollard oak,
The leafy antlers sprout.

For She who planned the mossy lodge,
Mistrusting her evasive skill,
Had to a Primrose looked for aid
Her wishes to fulfil.

• High on the trunk's projecting brow,
And fixed an infant's span above
The budding flowers, peeped forth the
nest
The prettiest of the grove !

The treasure proudly did I show
To some whose minds without disdain
Can turn to little things ; but once
Looked up for it in vain :

'Tis gone—a ruthless spoiler's prey,
Who heeds not beauty, love, or song,
'Tis gone (so seemed it) and we grieved
Indignant at the wrong.

Just three days after, passing by
In clearer light the moss-built cell
I saw, espied its shady mouth ;
And felt that all was well.

The Primrose for a veil had spread
The largest of her upright leaves ;
And thus, for purposes benign,
A simple flower deceives.

Concealed from friends who might dis-
turb

Thy quiet with no ill intent,
Secure from evil eyes and hands
On barbarous plunder bent,

Rest, Mother-bird ! and when thy young
Take flight, and thou art free to roam.

When withered is the guardian Flower,
And empty thy late home,

Think how ye prospered, thou and thine,
Amid the unviolated grove
Housed near the growing Primrose-tuft
In foresight, or in love.

1833.

XXVIII

LOVE LIES BLEEDING

You call it, "Love lies bleeding,"—so
you may,

Though the red Flower, not prostrate,
only droops,
As we have seen it here from day to day,
From month to month, life passing not
away :

A flower how rich in sadness ! Even
thus stoops,
(Sentient by Grecian sculptor's mar-
vellous power)

Thus leans, with hanging brow and body
bent

Earthward in uncomplaining languish-
ment,

The dying Gladiator. So, sad Flower !
(Tis fancy guides me willing to be led,
Though by a slender thread,)

So drooped Adonis bathed in sanguine
dew

Of his death-wound, when he from
innocent air

The gentlest breath of resignation drew ;
While Venus in a passion of despair

Reut, weeping over him, her golden hair
Spangled with drops of that celestial
shower.

She suffered, as Immortals sometimes do ;
But pangs more lasting far, *that* lover
knew

Who first, weighed down by scorn, in
some lone bower

Did press this semblance of unpitied
smart

Into the service of his constant heart,
His own dejection, downcast Flower !
could share

With thine, and gave the mournful name
which thou wilt ever bear.

XXIX

COMPANION TO THE FOREGOING

NEVER enlivened with the liveliest ray
That fosters growth or checks or cheers
decay,

Nor by the heaviest rain-drops more
denrest.

This Flower, that first appeared a
summer's guest,

Preserves her beauty mid autumnal
leaves

And to her mournful habits fondly
cleaves:

When files of stateliest plants have ceased
to bloom,

One after one submitting to their doom,
When her coevals each and all are fled,
What keeps her thus reclined upon her
lonesome bed?

The old mythologists, more impress'd
than we

Of this late day by character in tree
Or herb, that claimed peculiar sympathy,
Or by the silent lapse of fountain clear,
Or with the language of the viewless air
By bird or beast made vocal, sought a
cause

To solve the mystery, not in Nature's
laws

But in Man's fortunes. Hence a thou-
sand tales

Sung to the plaintive lyre in Grecian vales.
Nor doubt that something of their spirit
swayed

The fancy-stricken Youth or heart-sick
Maid,

Who, while each stood companionless
and eyed

This undeparting Flower in crimson
died,

Thought of a wound which death is
slow to cure,

A fate that has endured and yet endure,
And, patience coveting yet passion
feeding,

Called the dejected Lingerer, *Love lies
bleeding.*

XXX

RURAL ILLUSIONS

SYLPH was it? or a Bird more bright
Than those of fabulous stock?

A second darted by;—and lo!

Another of the flock;

Through sunshine flitting from the bough
To nestle in the rock.

Transc'nt deception! a gay freak

Of April's mimicries!

Those brilliant strangers, hailed with joy
Among the budding trees,

Proved last year's leaves, pushed from
the spray

To frolic on the breeze.

Maternal Flora! show thy face,

And let thy hand be seen,

Thy hand here sprinkling tiny flowers.

That, as they touch the green,

Take root (so seems it) and look up

In honour of their Queen.

Yet, sooth, those little starry specks,

That not in vain aspired

To be confounded with live growths.

Most dainty, most admired,

Were only blossoms dropped from twigs
Of their own offspring tired.

Not such the world's illusive shows;

Her wingless flutterings,

Her blossoms which, though shed,
outrave

The floweret as it springs,

For the undeceived, smile as they may,

Are melancholy things:

But gentle nature plays her part

With ever-varying wiles,

And transient feignings with plain truth

So well she reconciles,

That those fond fliters most are pleased

Whom oftenest she beguiles.

1832.

XXXI

THE KITTEN AND FALLING
LEAVES

THAT way look, my Infant, lo!

What a pretty baby-show!

See the Kitten on the wall,

Sporting with the leaves that fall.

Withered leaves—one—two—and three—

From the lofty elder-tree!

Through the calm and frosty air

Of this morning bright and fair,

Eddying round and round they sink

Softly, slowly: one might think,

From the motions that are made,

Every little leaf conveyed

Sylph or Faery hither tending.—

To this lower world descending,

Each invisible and mute,

In his wavering parachute.

—But the Kitten, how she starts,

Crouches, stretches, paws, and darts!

First at one, and then its fellow

Just as light and just as yellow;

There are many now—now one—

Now they stop and there are none:

What intenseness of desire

In her upward eye of fire!

With a tiger-leap half way

Now she meets the coming prey,

Lets it go as fast, and then

Has it in her power again:

Now she works with three or four

Like an Indian conjurer;

Quick as he in feats of art,

Far beyond in joy of heart.

Were her antics played in the eye

Of a thousand standers-by,

Clapping hands with shout and stare,

What would little Tabby care

For the plaudits of the crowd?

Over happy to be proud,

Over wealthy in the treasure

Of her own exceeding pleasure!

'Tis a pretty baby-tread;

Nor, I deem, for me unmeet;

Here, for neither Babe nor me,
 Other play-mate can I see.
 Of the countless living things,
 That with stir of feet and wings
 (In the sun or under shade,
 Upon bough or grassy blade)
 And with busy revellings,
 Chirp and song, and murmurings,
 Made this orchard's narrow space,
 And this vale so blithe a place;
 Multitudes are swept away
 Never more to breathe the day:
 Some are sleeping; some in bands
 Travelled into distant lands;
 Others slunk to moor and wood,
 Far from human neighbourhood;
 And, among the Kinds that keep
 With us closer fellowship,
 With us openly abide,
 All but laid their mirth aside.

Where is he that giddy Sprite,
 Blue-cap, with his colours bright,
 Who was blest as bird could be,
 Feeding in the apple-tree:
 Made such waste on spoil and rout,
 Turning blossoms inside out;
 Hung-head pointing towards the
 ground—

Fluttered, perched, into a round
 Bound himself, and then unbound;
 Lithest, gaudiest Harlequin!
 Prettiest Tumbler ever seen!
 Light of heart and light of limb;
 What is now become of Him?
 Lambs, that through the mountains
 went

Frisking, bleating merriment,
 When the year was in its prime,
 They are sobered by this time.
 If you look to vale or hill,
 If you listen, all is still,
 Save a little neighbouring rill,
 That from out the rocky ground
 Strikes a solitary sound.

Vainly glitter hill and plain,
 And the air is calm in vain;
 Vainly Morning spreads the lure
 Of a sky serene and pure;
 Creature none can she decoy
 Into open sign of joy:
 Is it that they have a fear
 Of the dreary season near?
 Or that other pleasures be
 Sweeter even than gaiety?

Yet, whate'er enjoyments dwell
 In the impenetrable cell
 Of the silent heart which Nature
 Furnishes to every creature;
 Whatso'er we feel and know
 Too sedate for outward show,
 Such a light of gladness breaks,

Pretty Kitten! from thy freaks,—
 Spreads with such a living grace
 O'er my little Laura's face;
 Yes, the sight so stirs, and charms
 Thee, Baby, laughing in my arms,
 That almost I could repine
 That your transports are not mine,
 That I do not wholly fare
 Even as ye do, thoughtless pair!
 And I will have my careless season
 Spite of melancholy reason,
 Will walk through life in such a way
 That, when time brings on decay,
 Now and then I may possess
 Hours of perfect gladness.
 —Pleased by any random toy;
 By a kitten's busy joy,
 Or an infant's laughing eye
 Sharing in the ecstasy;
 I would fare like that or this,
 Find my wisdom in my bliss;
 Keep the sprightly soul awake,
 And have faculties to take,
 Even from things by sorrow wrought,
 Matter for a jocund thought.
 Spite of care, and spite of grief,
 To gambol with Life's falling leaf.

1804.

XXXII

ADDRESS TO MY INFANT
DAUGHTER, DORA,

ON BEING REMINDED THAT SHE WAS A
 MONTH OLD THAT DAY, SEPTEMBER 16

———HAST thou then survived—
 Mild Offspring of mfrn humanity,
 Meek infant! among all forlornest things
 The most forlorn—one life of that bright
 star,
 The second glory of the Heavens?—
 Thou hast;
 Already hast survived that great decay,
 That transformation through the wide
 earth felt,
 And by all nations. In that Being's
 sight
 From whom the Race of human kind
 proceed,
 A thousand years are but as yesterday;
 And one day's narrow circuit is to Him
 Not less capacious than a thousand years.
 But what is time? What outward
 glory? neither
 A measure is of Thee, whose claims
 extend
 Through "heaven's eternal year."—Yet
 hail to Thee,
 Frail, feeble, Monthling!—by that name,
 methinks.
 Thy scanty breathing-time is portioned
 out

Not idly.—Hadst thou been of Indian birth.

Couched on a casual bed of moss and leaves,

And rudely canopied by leafy boughs,

Or to the churlish elements exposed

On the blank plains,—the coldness of the night,

Or the night's darkness, or its cheerful face

Of beauty, by the changing moon adorned,

Would, with imperious admonition, then

Have scored thine age, and punctually timed

Thine infant history, on the minds of those

Who might have wandered with thee.—Mother's love,

Nor less than mother's love in other breasts,

Will, amongst us warm-clad and warmly housed,

Do for thee what the finger of the heavens

Doth all too often harshly execute

For thy unblest coevals, amid wilds

Where fancy hath small liberty to grace

The affections, to exalt them or refine ;

And the maternal sympathy itself,

Though strong, is, in the main, a joyless tie

Of naked instinct, wound about the heart.

Happier, far happier is thy lot and ours !

Even now—to solemnise thy helpless state,

And to enliven in the mind's regard

Thy passive beauty—parallels have risen,

Resemblances, or contrasts, that connect,

Within the region of a father's thoughts,

Thee and thy mate and sister of the sky.

And first :—thy sinless progress, through a world

By sorrow darkened and by care disturbed,

Apt likeness bears to hers, through gathered clouds,

Moving untouched in silver purity,

And cheering oft-times thy reluctant gloom.

Fair are ye both, and both are free from stain :

But thou, how leisurely thou fill'st thy horn

With brightness ! leaving her to post along,

And range about, disquieted in change,

And still impatient of the shape she wears.

Once up, once down the hill, one journey, Babe

That will suffice thee ; and it seems that now

Thou hast fore-knowledge that such task is thine :

Thou travellest so contentedly, and sleep'st

In such a heedless peace. Alas ! full soon

Hath this conception, grateful to behold,

Changed countenance, left an object sullied o'er

By breathing mist ; and thine appears to be

A mournful labour, while to her is given

Hope, and a renovation without end.

—That smile forbids the thought ; for on thy face

Smiles are beginning, like the beams of dawn,

To shoot and circulate ; smiles have there been seen ;

Tranquil assurances that Heaven supports

The feeble motions of thy life, and cheers

Thy loneliness : or shall those smiles be called

Feelers of love, put forth as if to explore

This untried world, and to prepare thy way

Through a strait passage intricate and dim ?

Such are they ; and the same are tokens, signs,

Which, when the appointed season hath arrived,

Joy, as her holiest language, shall adopt :

And Reason's godlike Power be proud to own.

1804.

XXXIII

THE WAGGONER

In Cairo's crowded streets
The impatient Merchant, wondering, waits in vain,
And Mecca saddens at the long delay.

THOMSON.

TO

CHARLES LAMB, ESQ.

MY DEAR FRIEND,

WHEN I sent you, a few weeks ago, the Tale of Peter Bell, you asked "why THE WAGGONER was not added."—To say the truth,—from the higher tone of imagination, and the deeper touches of passion aimed at in the former, I apprehended, this little Piece could not accompany it without disadvantage. In the year 1806, if I am not mistaken, THE WAGGONER was read to you in manu-

script, and, as you have remembered it for so long a time, I am the more encouraged to hope, that, since the localities on which the Poem partly depends did not prevent its being interesting to you, it may prove acceptable to others. Being therefore in some measure the cause of its present appearance, you must allow me the gratification of inscribing it to you; in acknowledgment of the pleasure I have derived from your Writings, and of the high esteem with which
I am very truly yours,

WILLIAM WORDSWORTH.

RYDAL MOUNT, May 20, 1819.

CANTO FIRST

'Tis spent—this burning day of June!
Soft darkness o'er its latest gleams is
stealing;

The buzzing dor-hawk, round and
round, is wheeling,—

That solitary bird
Is all that can be heard
In silence deeper far than that of deepest
noon!

Confiding Glow-worms, 'tis a night
Propitious to your earth-born light!
But where the scattered stars are seen
In hazy straits the clouds between,
Each, in his station twinkling not,
Seems changed into a pallid spot.
The mountains against heaven's grave
weight

Rise up, and grow to wondrous height.
The air, as in a lion's den,
Is close and hot;—and now and then
Comes a tired and sultry breeze
With a haunting and a panting,
Like the stifling of disease;
But the dews allay the heat,
And the silence makes it sweet.

Hush, there is some one on the stir!
'Tis Benjamin the Waggoner;
Who long hath trod this toilsome way,
Companion of the night and day.
That far-off tinkling's drowsy cheer,
Mix'd with a faint yet grating sound
In a moment lost and found,
The Wain announces—by whose side
Along the banks of Rydal Mere
He paces on, a trusty Guide,—
Listen! you can scarcely hear!
Hither he his course is bending;—
Now he leaves the lower ground,
And up the craggy hill ascending
Many a stop and stay he makes,
Many a breathing-fit he takes;—
Steep the way and wearisome,
Yet all the while his whip is dumb!

The Horses have worked with right
good-will,

And so have gained the top of the hill;
He was patient, they were strong,
And now they smoothly glide along,
Recovering breath, and pleased to win
The praises of mild Benjamin.

Heaven shield him from mishap and
snare!

But why so early with this prayer?—

Is it for threatenings in the sky?

Or for some other danger nigh?
No! none is near him yet, though he
Be one of much infirmity;

For at the bottom of the brow,
Where once the DOVE and OLIVE-BOUGH
Offered a greeting of good ale
To all who entered Grasmere Vale;
And called on him who must depart
To leave it with a jovial heart;
There, where the DOVE and OLIVE-
BOUGH

Once hung, a Poet harbours now,
A simple water-drinking Bard;
Why need our Hero then (though frail
His best resolves) be on his guard?
He marches by, secure and bold;
Yet while he thinks on times of old,
It seems that all looks wondrous cold;
He shrugs his shoulders, shakes his head,
And, for the honest folk within,
It is a doubt with Benjamin
Whether they be alive or dead!

Here is no danger,—none at all!
Beyond his wish he walks secure;
But pass a mile,—and then for trial,—
Then for the pride of self-denial;
If he resist that tempting door,
Which with such friendly voice will
call;
If he resist those casement panes,
And that bright gleam which thence will
fall

Upon his Leaders' bells and manes,
Inviting him with cheerful lure:
For still, though all be dark elsewhere,
Some shining notice will be there,
Of open house and ready fare.

The place to Benjamin right well
Is known, and by as strong a spell
As used to be that sign of love
And hope—the OLIVE-BOUGH and DOVE;
He knows it to his cost, good Man!
Who does not know the famous SWAN?
Object uncouth! and yet our boast,
For it was painted by the Host;
His own conceit the figure planned,
'Twas coloured all by his own hand;
And that frail Child of thirsty clay,
Of whom I sing this rustic lay,
Could tell with self-dissatisfaction
Quaint stories of the bird's attraction!¹

¹ This rude piece of self-taught art (such
is the progress of refinement) has been supplanted
by a professional production.

Well! that is past—and in despite
Of open door and shining light.
And now the conqueror essays
The long ascent of Dunmail-raise;
And with his team is gentle here
As when he clomb from Rydal Mere;
His whip they do not dread—his voice
They only hear it to rejoice.
To stand or go is at *their* pleasure;
Their efforts and their time they measure
By generous pride within the breast;
And, while they strain, and while they
rest,
He thus pursues his thoughts at leisure.

Now am I fairly safe to-night—
And with proud cause my heart is light:
I trespassed lately worse than ever—
But Heaven has blest a good endeavour;
And, to my soul's content, I find
The evil One is left behind.
Yes, let my master fume and fret,
Here am I—with my horses yet!
My jolly team, he finds that ye
Will work for nobody but me!
Full proof of this the Country gained;
It knows how ye were vexed and
strained.

And forced unworthy stripes to bear,
When trusted to another's care.
Here was it—on this rugged slope,
Which now ye climb with heart and hope,
I saw you, between rage and fear,
Plunge, and fling back a spiteful ear,
And ever more and more confused,
As ye were more and more abused:
As chance would have it, passing by
I saw you in that jeopardy:
A word from me was like a charm;
Ye pulled together with one mind;
And your huge burthen, safe from harm,
Moved like a vessel in the wind!
—Yes, without me, up hills so high
'Tis vain to strive for mastery.
Then grieve not, jolly team! though
tough

The road we travel, steep, and rough;
Though Rydal-heights and Dunmail-
raise,

And all their fellow banks and braes,
Full often make you stretch and strain,
And halt for breath and halt again,
Yet to their sturdiness 'tis owing
That side by side we still are going!

While Benjamin in earnest mood
His meditations thus pursued,
A storm, which had been smothered long,
Was growing inwardly more strong;
And, in its struggles to get free,
Was busily employed as he.
The thunder had begun to growl—
He heard not, too intent of soul;

The air was now without a breath—
He marked not that 'twas still as death.
But soon large rain-drops on his head
Fell with the weight of drops of lead;
He starts—and takes, at the admonition,
A sage survey of his condition.
The road is black before his eyes,
Glimmering faintly where it lies;
Black is the sky—and every hill,
Up to the sky, is blacker still—
Sky, hill, and dale, one dismal room,
Hung round and overhung with gloom;
Save that above a single height
Is to be seen a lurid light,
Above Helm-crag!—a streak half dead;
A blurning of portentous red;
And near that lurid light, full well
The *ASTROLOGER*, sage Sidrophel,
Where at his desk and book he sits,
Puzzling aloft his curious wits;
He whose domain is *hell* in common
With no one but the *ANCIENT WOMAN*,
Cowering beside her lifted cell,
As if intent on magic spell:—
Dread pair, that, spite of wind and
weather,

Still sit upon Helm-crag together!

The *ASTROLOGER* was not unseen
By solitary Benjamin;
But total darkness came anon.
And he and every thing was gone:
And suddenly a rustling breeze,
(That would have rocked the sounding
trees
Hadaught of sylvan growth been there)
Swept through the Hollow long and bare:
The rain rushed down—the road was
battered,

As with the force of billows shattered;
The horses are dismayed, nor know
Whether they should stand or go;
And Benjamin is groping near them.
Sees nothing, and can scarcely hear them.
He is astounded,—wonder not,—
With such a charge in such a spot;
Astounded in the mountain gap
With thunder-peals, clap after clap.
Close-treading on the silent flashes—
And somewhere, as he thinks, by crashes
Among the rocks; with weight of rain,
And sullen motions long and slow,
That to a dreary distance go—
Till, breaking in upon the dying strain,
A rending o'er his head begins the fray
again.

Meanwhile, uncertain what to do,
And oftentimes compelled to halt,

1 A mountain of Grasmere, the broken summit of which presents two figures, full as distinctly shaped as that of the famous Cobbler near Arrochar in Scotland.

The horses cautiously pursue
Their way, without mishap or fault ;
And now have reached that pile of stones,
Heaped over brave King Dunmail's
bones ;

He who had once supreme command,
Last king of rocky Cumberland ;
His bones, and those of all his Power,
Slain here in a disastrous hour !

When, passing through this narrow
strait,

Stony, and dark, and desolate,
Benjamin can faintly hear
A voice that comes from some one near,
A female voice :—" Whoe'er you be,
Stop," it exclaimed, " and pity me !"
And, less in pity than in wonder,
In the darkness and the thunder,
The Waggoner, with prompt command,
Summons his horses to a stand.

While, with increasing agitation,
The Woman urged her supplication.
In rueful words, with sobs between—
The voice of tears that fell unseen :
' There came a flash—a startling glare,
And all Seat-Sandal was laid bare !
'Tis not a time for nice suggestion,
And Benjamin, without a question,
Taking her for some way-worn rover,
Said, " Mount, and get you under
cover !"

Another voice, in tone as hoarse
As a swollen brook with rugged course,
Cried out, " Good brother, why so fast ?
I've had a glimpse of you—*avast* !
Quince it suits you to be civil,
Take her at once—for good and evil !"

" It is my Husband," softly said
The Woman, as if half afraid :
By this time she was snug within,
Through help of honest Benjamin ;
She and her Babe, which to her breast
With thankfulness the Mother pressed ;
And now the same strong voice more
near
Said cordially, " My Friend, what cheer ?
Rough doings these ! as God's my judge,
The sky owes somebody a grudge !
We've had in half an hour or less
A twelvemonth's terror and distress !"

Then Benjamin entreats the Man
Would mount, too, quickly as he can :
The Sailor—Sailor now no more,
But such he had been heretofore—
To courteous Benjamin replied,
" Go you your way, and mind not me ;
For I must have, whate'er betide,
My Ass and fifty things beside,—
Go, and I'll follow speedily !"

The Waggon moves—and with its load
Descends along the sloping road ;
And the rough sailor instantly
Turns to a little tent hard by :
For when, at closing-in of day,
The family had come that way,
Green pasture and the soft warm 'air
Tempted them to settle there.—
Green is the grass for beast to graze,
Around the stones of Dunmail-raise !

The sailor gathers up his bed,
Takes down the canvas overhead ;
And, after farewell to the place,
A parting word—though not of grace,
Pursues, with Ass and all his store,
The way the Waggon went before.

CANTO SECOND

IF Wytheburn's modest House of
prayer,
As lowly as the lowliest dwelling,
Had, with its belfry's humble stock,
A little pair that hang in air,
Been mistress also of a clock,
(And one, too, not in crazy plight)
Twelve strokes that clock would have
been telling
Under the brow of old Helvellyn—
Its head-roll of midnight,
Then, when the Hero of my tale
Was passing by, and, down the vale
(The vale now silent, hushed I ween
As if a storm had never been)
Proceeding with a mind at ease ;
While the old Familiar of the seas
Intent to use his utmost haste,
Gained ground upon the Waggon fast,
And gives another lusty cheer ;
For spite of rumbling of the wheels,
A welcome greeting he can hear ;—
It is, a fiddle in its glee
Dinning from the CHERRY TREE !

Thence the sound—the light is there—
As Benjamin is now aware,
Who, to his inward thoughts confined,
Had almost reached the festive door,
When, startled by the Sailor's roar,
He hears a sound and sees the light.
And in a moment calls to mind
That 'tis the village MERRY-NIGHT !¹

Although before in no dejection,
At this insidious recollection
His heart with sudden joy is filled,—
His ears are by the music thrilled,
His eyes take pleasure in the road
Glittering before him bright and broad ;

¹ A term well known in the North of England, and applied to rural Festivals where young persons meet in the evening for the purpose of dancing.

And Benjamin is wet and cold,
And there are reasons manifold
That make the good, tow'ards which, he's
yearning,
Look fairly like a lawful earning.

Nor has thought time to come and go,
To vibrate between yes and no ;
For, cries the Sailor, " Glorious chance
That blew us hither !—let him dance,
Who can or will !—my honest soul,
" Our treat shall be a friendly bowl !"
He draws him to the door—" Come in,
Come, come," cries he to Benjamin !
And Benjamin—ah, woe is me !
Gave the word—the horses heard
And halted, though reluctantly.

" Blithe souls and lightsome heart
have we,
Feasting at the CHERRY TREE !"
This was the outside proclamation.
This was the inside salutation ;
What bustling—jostling—high and low !
A universal overflow !
What Tankards foaming from the tap !
What store of cakes in every lap !
What thumping—stumping—overhead !
The thunder had not been more busy :
With such a stir you would have said,
" This little place may well be dizzy !"
'Tis who can dance with greatest
vigour—
'Tis what can be most prompt and eager ;
As if it heard the fiddle's call,
The pewter clatters on the wall ;
The very bacon shows its feeling,
Swinging from the smoky ceiling !

A steaming bowl, a blazing fire,
What greater good can heart desire ?
'Twere worth a wise man's while to try
The utmost anger of the sky :
To seek for thoughts of a gloomy cast,
If such the bright amends at last.
Now should you say I judge amiss.
The CHERRY TREE shows proof of this ;
For soon of all the happy there,
Our Travellers are the happiest pair ;
All care with Benjamin is gone—
A Caesar past the Rubicon !
He thinks not of his long, long, strife ;—
The Sailor Man, by nature gay,
Hath no resolves to throw away ;
And he hath now forgot his Wife,
Hath quite forgotten her—or may be
Thinks her the luckiest soul on earth,
Within that warm and peaceful berth,
Under cover,
Terror over,
Sleeping by her sleeping Baby.

With bowl that sped from hand to
hand,
The gladdest of the gladsome band,

Amid their own delight and fun,
They hear—when every dance is done,
When every whirling bout is o'er—
The fiddle's *squeak*¹—that call to bliss,
Ever followed by a kiss,
They envy not the happy lot,
But enjoy their own the more !

While thus our jocund Travellers fare,
Up springs the Sailor from his chair—
Limps (for I might have told before
That he was lame) across the floor—
Is gone—returns—and with a prize ;
With what ?—A Ship of lusty size ;
A gallant stately Man-of-War,
Fixed on a smoothly-sliding car.
Surprise to all, but most surprise
To Benjamin, who rubs his eyes,
Not knowing that he had befriended—
A Man so gloriously attended !

" This," cries the Sailor, " A Third-
rate is—
Stand back, and you shall see her
graces !

This was the Flag-ship at the Nile,
The Vanguard—you may smirk and
smile,

But, pretty Maid, if you look near,
You'll find you've much in little here !
A nobler ship did never swim
And you shall see her in full trim :
I'll set, my friends, to do you honour,
Set every inch of sail upon her."
So said, so done ; and inasts, sails, yards,
He names them all ; and interlards
His speech with uncouth terms of art,
Accomplished in the showman's part ;
And then, as from a sudden check,
Cries out—" 'Tis there, the quarter-deck
On which brave Admiral Nelson stood—
A sight that would have roused your
blood !

One eye he had, which, bright as ten,
Burned like a fire among his men ;
Let this be land, and that be sea,
Here lay the French—and *thus* came we !"

Hushed was by this the fiddle's sound,
The dancers all were gathered round,
And, such the stillness of the house
You might have heard a nibbling mouse ;
While, borrowing helps where'er he may,
The Sailor through the story runs
Of ships to ships and guns to guns ;
And does his utmost to display
The dismal conflict, and the might
And terror of that marvellous night !
" A bowl, a bowl of double measure,"
Cries Benjamin, " a draught of length,
To Nelson, England's pride and treasure,
Her bulwark and her tower of strength !"

¹ At the close of each strathspey, or jig, a particular note from the fiddle, summons the music to the agreeable duty of saluting his partner.

When Benjamin had seized the bow,
The mastiff, from beneath the waggon;
Where he lay, watchful as a dragon,
Rattled his chain;—'twas all in vain,
For Benjamin, triumphant soul!
He heard the monitory growl;
Heard—and in opposition quaffed
A deep, determined, desperate draught!
Nor did the battered Tar forget,
Or flinch from what he deemed his debt:
Then, like a hero crowned with laurel,
Back to her place the ship he led;
Wheeled her back in full apparel;
And so, flag flying at mast head,
Re-yoked her to the Ass:—anon,
Cries Benjamin, "We must be gone."
Thus, after two hours' hearty stay,
Again behold them on their way!

CANTO THIRD

Right gladly had the horses stirred,
When they wished for greeting heard,
The whip's loud notice, from the door,
That they were free to move once more.
You think, those doings must have bred
In them disheartening, doubts, and
dread:

No, not a horse of all the eight.
Although it be a moonless night,
Fears either for himself or freight;
For this they know (and let it hide,
In part, the offences of their guide)
That Benjamin, with clouded brains,
Is worth the best with all their pains;
And, if they had a prayer to make,
The prayer would be that they may take
With him whatever comes in course,
The better fortune or the worse.
That no one else may have business near
them,

And, drunk or sober, he may steer them.

So, forth in dauntless mood they fare,
And with them goes the guardian pair.

Now, heroes, for the true commotion,
The triumph of your late devotion!
Can aught on earth impede delight,
Still mounting to a higher height;
And higher still—a greedy flight!
Can any low-born care pursue her,
Can any mortal clog come to her?
No notion have they—not a thought,
That is from joyless regions brought!
And, while they coast the silent lake,
Their inspiration I partake;
Share their empyreal spirits—yes,
With their enraptured vision, see—
O fancy—what a jubilee!

What shifting pictures—clad in gleams
Of colour bright as feverish dreams!
Earth, spangled sky, and lake serene,
Involved and restless all—a scene—

Pregnant with mutual exaltation,
Rich change, and multiplied creation!
This sight to me the Muse imparts;—
And then, what kindness in their hearts!
What tears of rapture, what vow-making,
Profound entreaties, and hand-shaking!
What solemn, vacant, interlacing,
As if they'd fall asleep embracing!
Then, in the turbulence of glee,
And in the excess of amity,
Says Benjamin, "That Ass of thine,
He spoils thy sport, and hinders mine:
If he were tethered to the waggon,
He'd drag as well what he is dragging;
And we, as brother should with brother
Might trudge it alongside each other!"

Forthwith, obedient to command,
The horses made a quiet stand;
And to the waggon's skirts was tied
The Creature, by the Mastiff's side,
The Mastiff wondering, and perplex
With dread of what will happen next;
And thinking it but sorry cheer,
To have such company so near!

This new arrangement made, the Wain
Through the still night proceeds again;
No Moon hath risen her light to lend;
But indistinctly may be ken'd
The VANGUARD, following close behind,
Sails spread, as if to catch the wind!

"Thy wife and child are snug and
warm,
Thy ship will travel without harm;
I like," said Benjamin, "her shape and
stature:
And this of mine—this bulky creature
Of which I have the steering—this,
Seen fairly, is not much amiss!
We want your streamers, friend, you
know;

But, altogether as we go,
We make a kind of handsome show!
Among these hills, from first to last,
We've weathered many a furious blast;
Hard passage forcing on, with head
Against the storm, and canvas spread.
I hate a boaster; but to thee
Will say't, who know'st both land and
sea,

The unluckiest hulk that stems the brine
Is hardly worse beset than mine.
When cross-winds on her quarter beat;
And, fairly lifted from my feet,
I stagger onward—heaven knows how;
But not so pleasantly as now:
Poor pilot I, by snows confounded,
And many a foundrous pit surrounded!
Yet here we are, by night and day
Grinding through rough and smooth our
way;

Through foul and fair our task fulfilling;
And long shall be so yet—God willing!"

"Ay," said the Tar, "through fair
and foul—
But save us from yon screeching owl!"
That instant was begun a fray
Which called their thoughts another way:
The mastiff, ill-conditioned carl!
What must he do but growl and snarl,
Still more and more dissatisfied
With the meek comrade at his side!
Till, not incensed though put to proof,
The Ass, uplifting a hind hoof,
Salutes the Mastiff on the head;
And so were better manners bred,
And all was calm and quieted.

"Yon screech-owl," says the Sailor,
turning

Back to his former cause of mourning,
"Yon owl!—pray God that all be well!
'Tis worse than any funeral bell;
As sure as I've the gift of sight,
We shall be meeting ghosts to-night!"
—Said Benjamin, "This whip shall lay
A thousand, if they cross our way.
I know that Wanton's noisy station,
I know him and his occupation;
The jolly bird hath learned his cheer
Upon the banks of Windermere:
Where a tribe of them make merry,
Mocking the Man that keeps the ferry:
Hallooing from an open throat,
Like travellers shouting for a boat.
—The tricks he learned at Windermere
This vagrant owl is playing here—
That is the worst of his employment:
He's at the top of his enjoyment!"

This explanation stilled the alarm,
Cured the foreboder like a charm;
This, and the manner, and the voice,
Summoned the Sailor to rejoice;
His heart is up—he fears no evil
From life or death, from man or devil;
He wheels—and, making many stops,
Brandished his crutch against the
mountain tops;

And, while he talked of blows and scars,
Benjamin, among the stars,
Beheld a dancing—and a glancing;
Such retreating and advancing
As, I ween, was never seen
In bloodiest battle since the days of Mars!

CANTO FOURTH

Thus they, with freaks of proud delight,
Beguile the remnant of the night;
And many a snatch of jovial song
Regales them as they wind along;
While to the music, from on high,
The echoes make a glad reply.—
But the sage Muse the revel heeds
No farther than her story needs;

Nor will she servilely attend
The loitering journey to its end.
—Blithe spirits of her own impel
The Muse, who scents the morning air,
To take of this transported pair
A brief and unproved farewell;
To quit the slow-paced waggon's side,
And wander down yon hawthorn dell,
With murmuring Greta for her guide.
—There doth she ken the awful form
Of Raven-crag—black as a storm—
Glimmering through the twilight pale;
And Ghimmer-crag,¹ his tall twin brother,
Each peering forth to meet the other:—
And, while she roves through St. John's
Vale,

Along the smooth unpathwayed plain,
By sheep-track or through cottage lane,
Where no disturbance comes to intrude
Upon the pensive solitude,
Her unsuspecting eye, perchance,
With the rude shepherd's favoured
glance,

Beholds the fancies in array,
Whose party-coloured garments gay
The silent company betray:
Red, green, and blue; a moment's sight!
For Skiddaw-top² with rosy light
Is touched—and all the band take flight.
—Fly also, Muse! and from the dell
Mount to the ridge of Nathdale Fell;
Thence, look thou forth o'er wood and
lawn

Hoar with the frost-like dews of dawn;
Across yon meadowy bottom look.
Where close fogs hide their parent brook;
And see, beyond that hamlet small,
The ruined towers of Threlkeld-hall,
Lurking in a double shade,
By trees and lingering twilight made!
There, at Blencathra's rugged feet,
Sir Lancelot gave a safe retreat
To noble Clifford; from annoy
Concealed the persecuted boy,
Well pleased in rustic garb to feed
His flock, and pipe on shepherd's reed
Among this multitude of hills,
Craggs, woodlands, waterfalls, and rills;
Which soon the morning shall unfold,
From east to west, in ample vest
Of massy gloom and radiance hold.

The mists, that o'er the streamlet's bed
Hung low, begin to rise and spread;
Even while I speak, their skirts of grey
Are smitten by a silver ray:
And lo!—up Castrigg's naked steep
(Where,³ smoothly urged, the vapours
sweep

Along—and scatter and divide,
Like fleecy clouds self-multiplied)
The stately waggon is ascending,
With faithful Benjamin attending,

¹ The crag of the ewe lamb.

Apparent now beside his team—
 Now lost amid a glittering steam :
 And with him goes his Sailor-friend,
 By this time near their journey's end ;
 And, after their high-minded riot,
 Sickening into thoughtful quiet ;
 As if the morning's pleasant hour,
 Had for their joys a killing power.
 And, sooth, for Benjamin a vein
 Is opened of still deeper pain
 As if his heart by notes were stung
 From out the lowly hedgerows flung ;
 As if the warbler lost in light
 Reproved his soarings of the night,
 In strains of rapture pure and holy
 Upbraided his distempered folly.

Drooping is he, his step is dull ;
 But the horses stretch and pull ;
 With increasing vigour climb,
 Eager to repair lost time ;
 Whether, by their own desert,
 Knowing what cause there is for shame,
 They are labouring to avert
 As much as may be of the blame,
 Which, they foresee, must soon alight
 Upon his head, whom, in despite
 Of all his failings, they love best ;
 Whether for him they are distressed,
 Or, by length of fasting roused,
 Are impatient to be housed :
 Up against the hill they strain
 • Tugging at the iron chain,
 Tugging all with might and main,
 Last and foremost, every horse
 To the utmost of his force !
 And the smoke and respiration,
 Rising like an exhalation,
 Blend with the mist—a moving shroud
 To form, an undissolving cloud ;
 Which, with slant ray, the merry sun
 Takes delight to play upon.
 Never golden-haired Apollo,
 Pleased some favourite chief to follow
 Through accidents of peace or war,
 In a perilous moment threw
 Around the object of his care
 Veil of such celestial hue ;
 Interposed so bright a screen—
 Him and his enemies between !

Alas ! what boots it ?—who can hide,
 When the malicious Fates are bent
 On working out an ill intent ?
 Can destiny be turned aside ?
 No—sad progress of my story !
 Benjamin, this outward glory
 Cannot shield thee from thy Master,
 Who from Keswick has pricked forth,
 Sour and surly as the north ;
 And, in fear of some disaster,
 Comes to give what help he may,
 And to hear what thou canst say ;

If, as needs he must forebode,
 Thou hast been loitering on the road !
 His fears, his doubts, may now take
 flight—
 The wished-for object is in sight ;
 Yet, trust the Muse, it rather bath
 Stirred him up to livelier wrath ;
 Which he stifles, moody man !
 With all the patience that he can ;
 To the end that, at your meeting,
 He may give thee decent greeting.

There he is—resolved to stop,
 Till the waggon gains the top ;
 But stop he cannot—must advance :
 Him Benjamin, with lucky glance,
 Espies—and instantly is ready,
 Self-collected, poised, and steady :
 And, to be the better seen,
 Issues from his radiant shroud,
 From his close-attending cloud,
 With careless air and open mien,
 Erect his port, and firm his going ;
 So struts yon cock that now is crowing :
 And the morning light in grace
 Strikes upon his lifted face,
 Hurrying the pallid hue away
 That might his trespasses betray.
 But what can all avail to clear him,
 Or what need of explanation,
 Parley or interrogation ?
 For the Master sees, alas !
 That unhappy Figure near him,
 Limping o'er the dewy grass,
 Where the road it fringes, sweet,
 Soft and cool to way-worn feet ;
 And, O indignity ! an Ass,
 By his noble Mastiff's side,
 Tethered to the waggon's tail :
 And the ship, in all her pride,
 Following after in full sail !
 Not to speak of babe and mother ;
 Who, contented with each other,
 And snug as birds in leafy arbour,
 Find, within, a blessed harbour !

With eager eyes the Master spies ;
 Looks in and out, and through and
 through ;
 Says nothing—till at last he spies
 A wound upon the mastiff's head,
 A wound, where plainly might be read
 What feats an Ass's hoof can do !
 But drop the rest :—this aggravation,
 This complicated provocation,
 A hoard of grievances unsealed ;
 All past forgiveness it repealed ;
 And thus, and through distempered blood
 On both sides, Benjamin the good,
 The patient, and the tender-hearted,
 Was from his team and waggon parted ;
 When duty of that day was o'er,
 Laid down his whip—and served no
 more.—

Nor could the waggon long survive,
Which Benjamin had ceased to drive
It lingered on :—guide after guide
Ambitiously the office tried ;
But each unmanageable hill
Called for *his* patience and *his* skill—
And sure it is, that through this night,
And what the morning brought to light,
Two losses had we to sustain,
We lost both WAGGONER and WAIN !

Accept, O Friend, for praise or blame,
The gift of this adventurous song ;
A record which I dared to frame,
Though timid scruples checked me long ;
They checked me—and I left the theme
Untouched ;—in spite of many a gleam
Of fancy which thereon was shed,
Like pleasant sunbeams shifting still
Upon the side of a distant hill :
But Nature might not be gainsaid ;
For what I have and what I miss
I sing of these :—it makes my bliss !
Nor is it I who plays the part,
But a shy spirit in my heart,
That comes and goes—will sometimes

leap
From hiding-places ten years deep ;
Or haunts me with familiar face,
Returning, like a ghost unaid.
Until the debt I owe he paid.
Forgive me, then ; for I had been
On friendly terms with this Machine :
In him, while he was wont to trace
Our roads, through many a long year's
space,

A living almanack had we ;
We had a speaking diary,
That in this uneventful place,
Gave to the days a mark and name
By which we knew them when they came.
—Yes, I, and all about me here,
Through all the changes of the year,
Had seen him through the mountains go,

In pomp of mist or pomp of snow,
Majestically huge and slow :
Or, with a milder grace adorning
The landscape of a summer's morning ;
While Grassmere smoothed her liquid
The moving image to detain ; plain
And mighty Fairfield, with a chime
Of echoes, to his march kept time ;
When little other business stirred,
And little other sound was heard ;
In that delicious hour of balm,
Stillness, solitude, and calm,
While yet the valley is arrayed,
On this side with a sober shade ;
On that is prodigally bright—
Crag, lawn, and wood—with rosy light.
—But most of all, thou lordly Wain !
I wish to have thee here again,
Where windows flap and chimney roars,
And all is dismal out of doors ;
And, sitting by my fire, I see
Eight sorry carts, no less a train !
Unworthy successors of thee,
Come straggling through the wind and
rain :

And oft, as they pass slowly on,
Beneath my windows, one by one,
See, perched upon the naked height,
The sunlit of a cumbrous freight,
A single traveller—and there
Another ; then perhaps a pair—
The lame, the sickly, and the old ;
Men, women, heartless with the cold ;
And babes in wet and starveling plight ;
Which once, be weather as it might,
Had still a nest within a nest,
Thy shelter—and their mother's breast !
Then most of all, then far the most,
Do I regret what we have lost ;
Am grieved for that unhappy sin
Which robbed us of good Benjamin :—
And of his stately Charge, which none
Could keep alive when He was gone !
1805.

POEMS OF THE IMAGINATION

I THERE WAS A BOY

THERE was a Boy ; ye knew him well,
ye cliffs
And islands of Winander !—many a
time,
At evening, when the earliest stars began
To move along the edges of the hills,
Rising or setting, would he stand alone,
Beneath the trees, or by the glimmering
lake ;
And there, with fingers interwoven,
both hands
Pressed closely palm to palm and to his
mouth

Uplifted, he, as through an instrument,
Blew mimic hootings to the silent owls,
That they might answer him.—And
they would shout
Across the watery vale, and shout again,
Responsive to his call,—with quivering
peals,
And long halloos, and screams, and
echoes loud
Redoubled and redoubled ; concourse wild
Of jocund din ! And, when there came
a pause
Of silence such as baffled his best skill :
Then, sometimes, in that silence, while
he hung

Listening, a gentle shock of mild surprise
Has carried far into his heart the voice
Of mountain-torrents; or the visible
scene

Would enter unawares into his mind
With all its solemn imagery, its rocks,
Its woods, and that uncertain heaven
received

Into the bosom of the steady lake.

This boy was taken from his mates,
and died
In childhood, ere he was full twelve years
old.

Pre-eminent in beauty is the vale
Where he was born and bred: the
church-yard hangs

Upon a slope above the village-school;
And, through that church-yard when my
way has led

On summer-evenings, I believe, that
there

A long half-hour together I have stood
Mute—looking at the grave in which he
lies!

1799.

II TO THE CUCKOO

O BLITHE New-comer! I have heard,
I hear thee and rejoice.

O Cuckoo! shall I call thee bird,
Or but a wandering Voice?

While I am lying on the grass

Thy twofold shout I hear,
From hill to hill it seems to pass,
At once far off, and near.

Though babbling only to the Vale,
Of sunshine and of flowers,
Thou bringest unto me a tale
Of visionary hours.

Thrice welcome, darling of the Spring!
Even yet thou art to me

No bird, but an invisible thing.

A voice, a mystery:

The same whom in my school-boy days
I listened to; that Cry
Which made me look a thousand ways
In bush, and tree, and sky.

To seek thee did I often rove
Through woods and on the green;
And thou wert still a hope, a love;
Still longed for, never seen.

And I can listen to thee yet;
Can lie upon the plain
And listen, till I do forget
That golden time again.

O blessed Bird! the earth we pace
Again appears to be

An unsubstantial, faery place;
That is fit home for Thee!

1804.

III A NIGHT PIECE

—The sky is overcast

With a continuous cloud of texture close,
Heavy and wan, all whitened by the
Moon,

Which through that veil is indistinctly
seen,

A dull, contracted circle, yielding light
So feebly spread, that not a shadow falls,
Chaqueing the ground—from rock,
plant, tree, or tower.

At length a pleasant instantaneous
gleam

Startles the pensive traveller while he
treads

His lonesome path, with unobserving eye
Bent earthwards; he looks up—the
clouds are split

Asunder,—and above his head he sees
The clear Moon, and the glory of the
heavens.

There, in a black-blue vault she sails
along,

Followed by multitudes of stars, that,
small

And sharp, and bright, along the dark
abyss

Drive as she drives: how fast they
wheel away,

Yet vanish not!—the wind is in the tree,
But they are silent;—still they roll along
Immeasurably distant: and the vault,

Built round by those white clouds,
enormous clouds,

Still deepens its unfathomable depth.

At length the Vision closes; and the
mind.

Not undisturbed by the delight it feels,
Which slowly settles into peaceful calm,
Is left to muse upon the solemn scene.

1798.

IV AIREY-FORCE VALLEY

—Nor a breath of air

Ruffles the bosom of this leafy glen.
From the brook's margin, wide around,
the trees

Are steadfast as the rocks; the brook
itself,

Old as the hills that feed it from afar,
Doth rather deepen than disturb the calm
Where all things else are still and motion-
less.

And yet, even now, a little breeze,
perchance

Escaped from boisterous winds that
ragged without,

Has entered, by the sturdy oaks unfelt,
But to its gentle touch how sensitive
Is the light ash! that, pendant from
the brow

Of yon dim cave, in seeming silence
 makes
 A soft-eye music of slow-waving boughs,
 Powerful almost as vocal harmony
 To stay the wanderer's steps and soothe
 his thoughts.

V

YEW-TREES

THREE is a Yew-tree, pride of Lorton
 Vale,
 Which to this day stands single, in the
 midst

Of its own darkness, as it stood of yore :
 Not loth to furnish weapons for the bands
 Of Umfraville or Percy ere they marched
 To Scotland's heaths ; or those that
 crossed the sea

And drew their sounding bows at
 Azincour,

Perhaps at earlier Crecy, or Poitiers.

Of vast circumference and gloom pro-
 found

This solitary Tree ! a living thing
 Produced too slowly ever to decay ;

Of form and aspect too magnificent

To be destroyed. But worthier still
 of note

Are those fraternal Four of Borrowdale,
 Joined in one solemn and capacious
 grove ;

Huge trunks ! and each particular
 trunk a growth

Of intertwined fibres serpentine

Up-coiling, and inveterately convolved ;
 Nor uninformed with Phantasy, and looks

That threaten the profane ;—a pillared
 shade.

Upon whose grassless floor of red-brown
 hue.

By sheddings from the pining umbrage
 tinged

Perennially—beneath whose sable roof
 Of boughs, as if for festal purpose, decked

With unrejoicing berries—ghostly Shapes
 May meet at noontide ; Fear and tremb-
 ling Hope,

Silence and Foresight : Death the Skeleton
 And Time the Shadow ;—there to cele-
 brate.

As in a natural temple scattered o'er
 With altars undisturbed of mossy stone,
 United worship : or in mute repose
 To lie, and listen to the mountain flood
 Murmuring from Glaramara's inmost
 caves. 1863.

VI

NUTTING

—It seems a day
 (I speak of one from many singled out)
 One of those heavenly days that cannot
 die :

When, in the eagerness of boyish hope,
 I left our cottage-threshold, sallying
 forth

With a huge wallet o'er my shoulders
 slung.

A nutting-crook in hand ; and turned
 my steps

Tow'rd some far-distant wood, a Figure
 quaint,

Tricked out in proud disguise of cast-off
 weeds

Which for that service had been hus-
 banded.

By exhortation of my frugal Dame—
 Motley, accoutrement, of power to smite

At thorns, and brakes, and brambles,—
 and, in truth,

More ragged than need was ! O'er
 pathless rocks,

Through beds of matted fern, and tangled
 thickets,

Forcing my way, I came to one dear nook
 Unvisited, where, not a broken bough

Drooped with its withered leaves, ungra-
 cious sign

Of devastation ; but the hazels rose
 Tall and erect, with tempting clusters
 hung,

A virgin scene !—A little while I stood,
 Breathing with such suppression of the
 heart

As joy delights in ; and, with wise
 restraint

Voluptuous, fearless of arrival, eyed
 The banquet ;—or beneath the trees I
 sate

Among the flowers, and with the flowers
 I played ;

A temper known to those, who, after
 long

And weary expectation, have been blest
 With sudden happiness beyond all hope.

Perhaps it was a bower beneath whose
 leaves

The violets of five seasons re-appear
 And fade, unseen by any human eye ;

Where fairy water-breaks do murmur on
 For ever : and I saw the sparkling foam,

And—with my cheek on one of those
 green stones

That, fleeced with moss, under the
 shady trees,

Lay round me, scattered like a flock of
 sheep—

I heard the murmur and the murmuring
 sound,

In that sweet mood when pleasure
 loves to pay

Tribute to ease ; and, of its joy secure,
 The heart luxuriates with indifferent
 things.

Wasting its kindness on stocks and
 stones.

And on the vacant air. Then up I rose,
 And dragged to earth both branch and
 bough, with crash
 And merciless ravage: and the shady
 nook
 Of hazels, and the green and mossy
 bower,
 Deformed and sullied, patiently gave up
 Their quiet being: and, unless I now
 Confound my present feelings with the
 past;
 Ere from the mutilated bower I turned
 Exulting, rich beyond the wealth of
 kings.
 I felt a sense of pain when I beheld
 The silent trees, and saw the intruding
 sky.—
 Then, dearest Maiden, move along these
 shades
 Impertinence of heart; with gentle hand
 Touch—for there is a spirit in the woods.
 1799.

VII

THE SYMPLOON PASS

— Brook and road.
 Were fellow-travellers, in this gloomy
 Pass,
 And with them did we journey several
 hours
 At a slow step. The immeasurable
 height
 Of woods decaying, never to be decayed.
 The stationary blasts of waterfalls.
 And in the narrow rent, at every turn,
 Winds thwarting winds bewildered and
 forlorn,
 The torrents shooting from the clear
 blue sky,
 The rocks that muttered close upon our
 ears,
 Black drizzling crags that spake by the
 wayside
 As if a voice were in them, the sick sight
 And giddy prospect of the raving stream,
 The unfettered clouds and region of the
 heavens,
 Tumult and peace, the darkness and the
 light—
 Were all like workings of one mind, the
 features
 Of the same face, blossoms upon one
 tree,
 Characters of the great Apocalypse,
 The types and symbols of Eternity,
 Of first, and last, and midst, and without
 end.
 1799.

VIII

SHE was a Phantom of delight
 When first she gleamed upon my sight;
 A lovely Apparition, sent
 To be a moment's ornament;

Her eyes as stars of Twilight fair;
 Like Twilight's, too, her dusky hair;
 But all things else about her drawn
 From May-time and the cheerful Dawn;
 A dancing Shape, an Image gay,
 Too late to startle, and way-lay.

I saw her upon nearer view,
 A Spirit, yet a Woman too!
 Her household motions light and free,
 And steps of virgin-liberty;
 A countenance in which did meet
 Sweet records, promises as sweet;
 A Creature not too bright or good
 For human nature's daily food;
 For transient sorrows, simple wiles,
 Praise, blame, love, kisses, tears, and
 smiles.

And now I see with eye serene
 The very pulse of the machine;
 A Being breathing thoughtful breath,
 A Traveller between life and death;
 The reason firm, the temperate will,
 Endurance, foresight, strength, and
 skill:
 A perfect Woman, nobly planned,
 To warn, to comfort, and command;
 And yet a Spirit still, and bright
 With something of angelic light.
 1804.

IX

O NIGHTINGALE! thou surely art
 A creature of a "fiery heart":—
 These notes of time—they pierce and
 pierce;
 Tumultuous harmony and fierce!
 Thou sing'st as if the God of wine
 Had helped thee to a Valentine;
 A song in mockery and despite
 Of shades, and dews, and silent night;
 And steady bliss, and all the loves
 Now sleeping in these peaceful groves.

I heard a Stock-dove sing or say
 His homely tale, this very day;
 His voice was buried among trees,
 Yet to be come-at by the breeze—
 He did not cease; but cooed—and
 cooed;
 And somewhat pensively he wooed:
 He sang of love, with quiet blending,
 Slow to begin, and never ending;
 Of serious faith, and inward glee;
 That was the song—the song for me!
 1806.

X

THREE years she grew in sun and shower,
 Then Nature said, "A lovelier flower
 On earth was never sown:
 This Child I to myself will take;
 She shall be mine, and I will make
 A Lady of my own."

Myself will to my darling be
Both law and impulse : and with me
The Girl, in rock and plain.
In earth and heaven, in glade and bower,
Shall feel an overseeing power
To kindle or restrain.

She shall be sportive as the fawn
That wild with glee across the lawn
Or up the mountain springs ;
And her's shall be the breathing balm,
And her's the silence and the calm
Of mute insensate things.

The floating clouds their state shall lend
To her ; for her the willow bend ;
Nor shall she fail to see
Even in the motions of the Storm
Grace that shall mould the Maiden's
form

By silent sympathy.

The stars of midnight shall be dear
To her ; and she shall lean her ear
In many a secret place
Where rivulets dance their wayward
round,

And beauty born of murmuring sound
Shall pass into her face.

And vital feelings of delight
Shall rear her form to stately height,
Her virgin bosom swell ;
Such thoughts to Lucy I will give
While she and I together live
Here in this happy dell."

Thus Nature spake—The work was
done—

How soon my Lucy's race was run !
She died, and left to me
This heath, this calm, and quiet scene ;
The memory of what has been,
And never more will be. 1799.

XI

A SLUMBER did my spirit seal ;

I had no human fears :

She seemed a thing that could not feel
The touch of earthly years.

No motion has she now, no force ;

She neither hears nor sees ;

Roll'd round in earth's diurnal course,
With rocks, and stones, and trees.

1799.

XII

I WANDERED lonely as a cloud
That floats on high o'er vales and hills,

When all at once I saw a crowd,

A host, of golden daffodils ;

Beside the lake, beneath the trees,

Fluttering and dancing in the breeze.

Continuous as the stars that shine

And twinkle on the milky way.

They stretched in never-ending line
Along the margin of a bay :
Ten thousand saw I at a glance,
Tossing their heads in sprightly dance

The waves beside them danced ; but
they

Out-did the sparkling waves in glee ;

A poet could not but be gay,

In such a jocund company :

I gazed—and gazed—but little thought
What wealth the show to me had brought :

For oft, when on my couch I lie

In vacant or in pensive mood,

They flash upon that inward eye

Which is the bliss of solitude ;

And then my heart with pleasure fills,

And dances with the daffodils.

1804

XIII

THE REVERIE OF POOR SUSAN

At the corner of Wood Street, when
daylight appears,

Hangs a Thrush that sings loud, it has
sung for three years :

Poor Susan has passed by the spot, and
has heard

In the silence of morn'ng the song of the
Bird.

'Tis a note of enchantment ; what ails
her ? She sees

A mountain ascending, a vision of trees ?
Bright volumes of vapour through Lotherbury glide,

And a river flows on through the vale of
Cheapside.

Green pastures she views in the midst of
the dale,

Down which she so often has tripped with
her pail ;

And a single small cottage, a nest like a
dove's,

The one only dwelling on earth that she
loves.

She looks, and her heart is in heaven :
but they fade,

The mist and the river, the hill and the
shade :

The stream will not flow, and the hill
will not rise,

And the colours have all passed away
from her eyes !

1797.

XIV

POWER OF MUSIC

AN Orpheus ! an Orpheus ! yes, Faith
may grow bold,

And take to herself all the wonders of
old ;—

Near the stately Pantheon you'll meet
with the same
In the street that from Oxford lath
borrowed its name.

His station is there; and he works on
the crowd.
He sways them with harmony merry
and loud;
He fills with his power all their hearts to
the brim—
Was aught ever heard like his fiddle
and him?

What an eager assembly! what an
empire is this!
The weary have life, and the hungry
have bliss;
The mourner is cheered, and the anxious
have rest;
And the guilt-burthened soul is no longer
oppressed.

As the Moon brightens round her the
clouds of the night,
So He, where He stands, is a centre of
light;

It gleams on the face, there, of dusky-
browed Jack,
And the pale-visaged Baker's, with basket
on back.

That errand-bound 'Prentice was
passing in haste—
What matter! he's caught—and his
time runs to waste;
The Newsman is stopped, though he
stops on the fret;
And the half-breathless Lamplighter—
he's in the net!

The Porter sits down on the weight which
he bore;
The Lass with her barrow wheels hither
her store:—

If a thief could be here he might pilfer
at ease;
She sees the Musician, 'tis all that she
sees!

He stands, backed by the wall;—he
abates not his din;
His hat gives him vigour, with boons
dropping in,
From the old and the young, from the
poorest; and there!
The one-pennied Boy has his penny to
spare.

O blest are the hearers, and proud to be
the hand
Of the pleasure it spreads through so
thankful a band;

I am glad for him, blind as he is!—all
the while
If they speak 'tis to praise, and they
praise with a smile.

That tall Man, a giant in bulk and in
height.

Not an inch of his body is free from
delight;

Can he keep himself still, if he would? oh,
not he!

The music stirs in him like wind
through a tree.

Mark that Cripple who leans on his
crutch; like a tower

That long has leaned forward, leans
hour after hour!—

That Mother, whose spirit in fetters is
bound.

While she dandles the Babe in her arms
to the sound.

Now, coaches and chariots! roar on like
a stream;

Here are twenty souls happy as souls in
a dream:

They are deaf to your murmurs—they
care not for you,

Nor what ye are flying, nor what ye
pursue!

XV STAR-GAZERS

What crowd is this? what have we here!
we must not pass it by;

A Telescope upon its frame, and pointed
to the sky;

Long is it as a barber's pole, or mast of
little boat,

Some little pleasure-skiff, that doth
on Thames's waters float.

The Show-man chooses well his place,
'tis Leicester's busy Square;

And is as happy in his night, for the
heavens are blue and fair;

Calm, though impatient, is the crowd;
each stands ready with the fee,

And envies him that's looking;—what
an insight must it be!

Yet, Showman, where can lie the cause?
Shall thy Implement have blame.

A boaster, that when he is tried, fails,
and is put to shame?

Or is it good as others are, and be their
eyes in fault?

Their eyes, or minds? or, finally, is yon
resplendent vault?

Is nothing of that radiant pomp so good
as we have here?

Or gives a thing but small delight that
never can be dear?

The silver moon with all her vales, and
hills of mightiest fame.

Doth she betray us when they're seen?
or are they but a name?

Or is it rather that Conceit rapacious is
and strong,
And bounty never yields so much but
it seems to do her wrong?
Or is it, that when human Souls a journey
long have had
And are returned into themselves, they
cannot but be sad?

Or must we be constrained to think
that these Spectators rude,
Poor in estate, of manners base, men of
the multitude,
Have souls which never yet have risen,
and therefore prostrate lie?
No, no, this cannot be:—men thirst
for power and majesty!

Does, then, a deep and earnest thought
the blissful mind employ
Of him who gazes, or has gazed? a grave
and steady joy,
That doth reject all show of pride, admits
no outward sign,
Because not of this noisy world, but
silent and divine!

Whatever be the cause, 'tis sure that
they who pry and pore
seem to meet with little gain, secure less
happy than before:
One after One they take their turn, nor
have I once espied
That doth not slackly go away, as if
dissatisfied.

1806.

XVI

WRITTEN IN MARCH

WHILE RESTING ON THE BRIDGE AT THE
FOOT OF BROTHER'S WATER

THE Cock is crowing,
The stream is flowing,
The small birds twitter,
The lake doth glitter,
The green field sleeps in the sun;
The oldest and youngest
Are at work with the strongest;
The cattle are grazing,
Their heads never raising;
There are forty feeding like one!

Like an army defeated
The snow hath retreated,
And now doth fare ill
On the top of the bare hill;
The Whinnyboy is whooping—anon—
anon:
There's joy in the mountains;
There's life in the fountains;
Small clouds are sailing,
Blue sky prevailing;
The rain is over and gone!

1891.

XVII

LYRE! though such power do in thy
magic live
As might from India's farthest plain
Recall the not unwilling Maid,
Assist me to detain
The lovely Fugitive:
Check with thy notes the impulse
which, betrayed
By her sweet farewell looks, I longed to
aid.
Here let me gaze enrapt upon that eye,
The impregnable and awe-inspiring fort
Of contemplation, the calm point
By reason fenced from winds that sigh
Among the restless sails of vanity.
But if no wish be hers that we should
part.

A humble bliss would satisfy my heart,
Where all things are so fair,
Enough by her dear side to breathe the
air

Of this Elysian weather;
And, on or in, or near, the brook, espied
Shade upon the sunshine lying
Faint and somewhat pensively;
And downward image gaily vying
With its upright living tree
Mid silver clouds, and openings of blue
sky
As soft almost and deep as her cerulean
eye.

Nor less the joy with many a glance
Cast up the Stream or down at her
beseeching.

To mark its eddying foam-balls prettily
distrest
By ever-changing shape and want of
rest:

Or watch, with mutual teaching,
The current as it plays
In flashing leaps and stealthy
creeps

Adown a rocky maze;
Or note (translucent summer's happiest
chance!)
In the slope-channel floored with pebbles
bright.

Stones of all hues, gem emulous of gem,
So vivid that they take from keenest
sight

The liquid veil that seeks not to hide
them.

XVIII

BEGGARS

SHE had of tall man's height or more;
Her face from summer's noontide heat
No bonnet shaded, but she wore
A mantle, to her very feet
Descending with a graceful flow,
And on her head a cap as white as new-
fallen snow.

Her skin was of Egyptian brown :
Haughty, as if her eye had seen
Its own light to a distance thrown,
She towered, fit person for a Queen
To lead those ancient Amazonian
files ;

Or fuling Bandit's wife among the
Grecian isles.

Advancing, forth she stretched her
hand
And begged an alms with doleful plea
That ceased not ; on our English land
Such woes, I knew, could never be :
And yet a boon I gave her, for the
creature
Was beautiful to see—a weed of glorious
feature.

I left her, and pursued my way ;
And soon before me did espy
A pair of little Boys at play,
Chasing a crimson butterfly :
The taller followed with his hat in
hand,
Wreathed round with yellow flowers
the gayest of the land.

The other wore a girl's crown
With leaves of laurel stuck about ;
And, while both followed up and down,
Each whooping with a merry shout,
In their fraternal features I could
trace
Unquestionable lines of that wild Sup-
pliant's face.

Yet they, so blithe of heart, seemed fit
For finest tasks of earth or air :
Wings let them have, and they might
flit
Precursors to Aurora's car,
Scattering fresh flowers ; though happier
far, I ween.
To hunt their fluttering game o'er rock
and level green.

They dart across my path—but lo,
Each ready with a plaintive whine !
Said I, "not half an hour ago
Your Mother has had alms of mine."
"That cannot be," one answered—
"she is dead :"—
I looked reproof—they saw—but neither
hung his head.

"She has been dead, Sir, many a day."
"Hush, boys ! you're telling me a lie !
It was your Mother, as I say !"
And, in the twinkling of an eye,
"Come ! come !" cried one, and without
more ado,
Off to some other play the joyous Vag-
rants flew !

1802.

XIX

SEQUEL TO THE FOREGOING,

COMPOSED MANY YEARS AFTER

Where are they now, those wanton
Boys ?
For whose free range the dædal earth
Was filled with animated toys,
And implements of frolic mirth :
With tools for ready wit to guide ;
And ornaments of scullier pride,
More fresh, more bright, than princes
wear :
For what one moment flung aside,
Another could repair ;
What good or evil have they seen
Since I their pastime witnessed here,
Their daring wiles, their sportive cheer ?
I ask—but all is dark between !

They met me in a genial hour,
When universal nature breathed
As with the breath of one sweet flower,—
A time to overrule the power
Of discontent, and check the birth
Of thoughts with better thoughts at
strife.

The most familiar bane of life
Since parting Innocence bequeathed
Mortality to Earth !
Soft clouds, the whitest of the year,
Sailed through the sky—the brooks ran
clear ;
The lambs from rock to rock were
bounding ;
With songs the budded groves resound-
And to my heart are still endeared
The thoughts with which it then was
cheered ;

The faith which saw that gladsome pair
Walk through the fire with unsinged
hair.

Or, if such faith must needs deceive—
Then, Spirits of beauty and of grace,
Associates in that eager chase :
Ye, who within the blameless mind
Your favourite seat of empire find—
Kind Spirits ! may we not believe
That they, so happy and so fair
Through your sweet influence, and the
care
Of pitying Heaven, at least were free
From touch of deadly injury ?
Destined, whate'er their earthly doom,
For mercy and immortal bloom !

*1817.

XX

GIPSIES

Yet are they here the same unbroken
knot
Of human Beings, in the self-same spot !

Men, women, children, yea the frame
Of the whole spectacle the same!
Only their fire seems bolder, yielding
light,
Now deep and red, the colouring of
night;
That on their Gipsy-faces falls,
Their bed of straw and blanket-
walls.

—Twelve hours, twelve bounteous hours
are gone, while I

Have been a traveller under open sky,
Much witnessing of change and cheer,
Yet as I left I find them here!
The weary Sun betook himself to rest;
Then issued Vesper from the fulgent
west,

Outshining like a visible God
The glorious path in which he trod.
And now, ascending, after one dark
hour

And one night's diminution of her power,
Behold the mighty Moon! this
way

She looks as if at them—but they
Regard not her:—oh better wrong and
strife

(By nature transient) than this torpid
life;

Life which the very stars reprove
As on their silent tasks they move!
Yet, witness all that stirs in heaven or
earth!

In scorn I speak not;—they are what
their birth

And breeding suffer them to be;
Wild outcasts of society!

1807.

XXI

RUTH

WHEN Ruth was left half desolate,
Her Father took another Mate;
And Ruth, not seven years old,
A slighted child, at her own will
Went wandering over dale and hill,
In thoughtless freedom, bold.

And she had made a pipe of straw,
And music from that pipe could draw
Like sounds of winds and floods;
Had built a bower upon the green,
As if she from her birth had been
An infant of the woods.

Beneath her father's roof, alone
She seemed to live; her thoughts her
own;

Herself her own delight;
Pleased with herself, nor sad, nor gay;
And, passing thus the live-long day,
She grew to woman's height.

There came a youth from Georgia's
shore—

A military casque he wore,
With splendid feathers dress'd;
He brought them from the Cherokees:
The feathers nodded in the breeze,
And made a gallant crest.

From Indian blood you deem him
sprung:

But no! he spake the English tongue,
And bore a soldier's name;
And, when America was free
From battle and from jeopardy,
He 'cross the ocean came.

With hues of genius on his cheek
In finest tones the Youth could speak:
While he was yet a boy,
The moon, the glory of the sun,
And streams that murmur as they run,
Had been his dearest joy.

He was a lovely Youth! I guess *
The panther in the wilderness
Was not so fair as he;
And, when he chose to sport and play,
No dolphin ever was so gay
Upon the tropic sea.*

Among the Indians he had fought,
And with him many tales he brought
Of pleasure and of fear;
Such tales as told to any maid
By such a Youth, in the green shade,
Were perilous to hear.

He told of girls—a happy rout!
Who choo their fold with dance and
shout,

Their pleasant Indian town,
To gather strawberries all day long;
Returning with a choral song
When daylight is gone down.

He spake of plants that hourly change
Their blossoms, through a boundless
range

Of intermingling hues;
With budding, fading, faded flowers
They stand the wonder of the bowers
From morn to evening dews.

He told of the magnolia, spread
High as a cloud, high over head!
The cypress and her spire;
Of flowers that with one scarlet
gleam

Cover a hundred leagues, and seem
To set the hills on fire.

The Youth of green savannahs spake,
And many an endless, endless lake,
With all its fairy crowds
Of islands, that together lie

As quietly as spots of sky
Among the evening clouds.

"How pleasant," then he said, "
were

A fisher or a hunter there,
In sunshine or in shade
To wander with an easy mind ;
And build a household fire, and find
A home in every glade !

What days and what bright years !
Ah me !

Our life were life indeed, with thee
So passed in quiet bliss,
And all the while," said he, " to know
That we were in a world of woe,
On such an earth as this ! "

And then he sometimes interwove
Fond thoughts about a father's love :
" For there," said he, " are spun
Around the heart such tender ties,
That our own children to our eyes
Are dearer than the sun.

Sweet Ruth ! and could you go with me
My helpmate in the woods to be,
Our shed at night to rear ;
Or run, my own adopted bride,
A sylvan huntress at my side,
And drive the flying deer !

Beloved Ruth ! "—No more he said.
The wakeful Ruth at midnight shed

• A solitary tear :
She thought again—and did agree
With him to sail across the sea,
And drive the flying deer.

" And now, as fitting is and right,
We in the church our faith will plight,
A husband and a wife."
Even so they did ; and I may say
That to sweet Ruth that happy day
Was more than human life.

Through dream and vision did she sink,
Delighted all the while to think
That on those lonesome floods,
And green savannahs, she should share
His board with lawful joy, and bear
His name in the wild woods.

But, as you have before been told,
This Stripling, sportive, gay, and bold,
And, with his dancing crest,
So beautiful, through savage lands
Had roamed about, with vagrant bands
Of Indians in the West.

The wind, the tempest roaring high,
The tumult of a tropic sky,
Might well be dangerous food
For Him, a Youth to whom was given
So much of earth—so much of heaven,
And such impetuous blood.

Whatever in those climes he found
Irregular in sight or sound
Died to his mind impart
A kindred impulse, seemed allied
To his own powers, and justified
The workings of his heart.

Nor less, to feed voluptuous thought,
The beauteous forms of nature wrought,
Fair trees and gorgeous flowers ;
The breezes their own languor lent ;
The stars had feelings, which they sent
Into those favoured bowers.

Yet, in his worst pursuits, I'ween
That sometimes there did intervene
Pure hopes of high intent :
For passions linked to forms so fair
And stately needs must have their share
Of noble sentiment.

But ill he lived, much evil saw,
With men to whom no better law
Nor better life was known ;
Deliberately, and undeceived,
Those wild men's vices he received,
And gave them back his own.

His genius and his moral frame
Were thus impaired, and he became
The slave of low desires :
A Man who without self-control
Would seek what the degraded soul
Unworthily admires.

And yet he with no feigned delight
Had wooed the Maiden, day and night
Had loved her, night and morn :
What could he less than love a Maid
Whose heart with so much nature
played ?
So kind and so forlorn !

Sometimes, most earnestly, he said,
" O Ruth ! I have been worse than dead ;
False thoughts, thoughts bold and vain
Encompassed me on every side
When I, in confidence and pride,
Had crossed the Atlantic main.

Before me shone a glorious world—
Fresh as a banner bright, unfurled
To music suddenly :
I looked upon those hills and plains,
And seemed as if let loose from chains,
To live at liberty.

No more of this : for now, by thee
Dear Ruth ! more happily set free
With nobler zeal I burn ;
My soul from darkness is released,
Like the whole sky when to the east
The morning doth return."

Full soon that better mind was gone ;
No hope, no wish remained, not one,—
They stirred him now no more ;

New objects did new pleasure give,
And once again he wished to live
As lawless as before.

Meanwhile, as thus with him it fared
They for the voyage were prepared,
And went to the sea-shore,
But, when they thither came, the Youth
Deserted his poor Bride, and Ruth
Could never find him more.

God help thee, Ruth!—Such pains she
had.

That she in half a year was mad,
And in a prison housed;
And there, with many a doleful song
Made of wild words, her cup of wrong
She fearfully caroused.

Yet sometimes milder hours she knew.
Nor wanted sun, nor rain, nor dew,
Nor pastimes of the May;
—They all were with her in her cell;
And a clear brook with cheerful knell
Did o'er the pebbles play.

When Ruth three seasons thus had lain,
There came a respite to her pain;
She from her prison fled;
But of the Vagrant none took thought;
And where it liked her best she sought
Her shelter and her bread.

Among the fields she breathed again:
The master-current of her brain
Ran permanent and free;
And, coming to the Banks of Tone,
There did she rest: and dwell alone
Under the greenwood tree.

The engines of her pain, the tools
That shaped her sorrow, rocks and pools,
And airs that gently stir
The vernal leaves—she loved them still;
Nor ever taxed them with the ill
Which had been done to her.

A Barn her winter bed supplies;
But, till the warmth of summer skies
And summer days is gone.
(And all do in this tale agree)
She sleeps beneath the greenwood tree,
And other home hath none.

An innocent life, yet far astray!
And Ruth will, long before her day,
Be broken down and old:
Sore aches she needs must have! but
less
Of mind, than body's wretchedness,
From damp, and rain, and cold.

If she is prest by want of food,
She from her dwelling in the wood
Repairs to a road-side;
And there she begs at one steep place
Where up and down with easy pace
The horsemen-travellers ride.

That oaten pipe of hers is mute,
Or thrown away; but with a flute
Her loneliness she cheers:
This flute, made of a hemlock stalk,
At evening in his homeward walk
The Quantock woodman hears.

I, too, have passed her on the hills
Setting her little water-mills
By spouts and fountains wild—
Such small machinery as she turned
Ere she had wept, ere she had mourned,
A young and happy Child!

Farewell! and when thy days are told,
Ill-fated Ruth, in hallowed mould
Thy corpse shall buried be.
For thee a funeral bell shall ring,
And all the congregation sing
A Christian psalm for thee.

1799.

XXII

RESOLUTION AND INDEPENDENCE

THERE was a roaring in the wind all
flight;
The rain came heavily and fell in floods;
But now the sun is rising calm and bright
The birds are singing in the distant woods
Over his own sweet voice the Stock
dove broods;
The Jay makes answer as the Magpie
chatters;
And all the air is filled with pleasant
noise of waters.

All things that love the sun are out of
doors;
The sky rejoices in the morning's birth;
The grass is bright with rain-drops;—
on the moors
The hare is running races in her mirth;
And with her feet she from the plashy
earth
Raises a mist; that, glittering in the
sun,
Runs with her all the way, wherever she
doth run.

I was a Traveller then upon the moor,
I saw the hare that raced about with
joy;
I heard the woods and distant waters
roar;
Or heard them not, as happy as a boy:
The pleasant season did my heart
employ:
My old remembrances went from me
wholly:
And all the ways of men, so vain and
melancholy.

IV

But, as it sometimes chanceth, from the
 night
 Of joy in minds that can no further go,
 As high as we have mounted in delight
 In our dejection do we sink as low ;
 To me that morning did it happen so ;
 And fears and fancies thick upon me
 came ;
 Dim sadness—and blind thoughts, I
 knew not, nor could name.

V

I heard the sky-lark warbling in the
 sky ;
 And I bethought me, of the playful
 hare ;
 Even such a happy Child of earth am I ;
 Even as these blissful creatures do I fare ;
 Far from the world I walk, and from all
 care ;
 But there may come another day to me—
 Solitude, pain of heart, distress, and
 poverty.

VI

My whole life I have lived in pleasant
 thought,
 As if life's business were a summer
 mood ;
 As if all needful things would come un-
 sought ;
 To genial faith, still rich in genial good ;
 But how can He expect that others
 should
 Build for him, sow for him, and at his
 call
 Love him, who for himself will take no
 heed at all ?

VII

I thought of Chatterton, the marvellous
 Boy,
 The sleepless Soul that perished in his
 pride ;
 Of Him who walked in glory and in joy
 Following his plough, along the mountain-
 side ;
 By our own spirits are we deified :
 We Poets in our youth begin in glad-
 ness ;
 But thereof come in the end despon-
 dency and madness.

VIII

Now, whether it were by peculiar grace,
 A leading from above, a something
 given,
 Yet it befel, that, in this lonely place,
 When I with these untoward thoughts
 had striven,
 Beside a pool bare to the eye of heaven
 I saw a Man before me unawares :
 The oldest man he seemed that ever
 wore grey hairs.

IX

As a huge stone is sometimes seen to lie
 Couched on the bald top of an eminence ;
 Worrier to all who do the same espy,
 By what means it could thither come,
 and whence ;
 So that it seems a thing endued with
 sense :
 Like a sea-beast crawled forth, that on a
 shelf
 Of rock or sand reposeth, there to sun
 itself ;

X

Such seemed this Man, not all alive nor
 dead,
 Nor all asleep,—in his extreme old age :
 His body was bent double, feet and head
 Coming together in life's pilgrimage ;
 As if some dire constraint of pain, or
 rage
 Of sickness felt by him in times long
 past,
 A more than human weight upon his
 frame had cast.

XI

Himself he propped, limbs, body, and
 pale face,
 Upon a long grey staff of shaven wood :
 And, still as I drew near with gentle
 pace,
 Upon the margin of that moorish flood
 Motionless as a cloud the old Man stood,
 That heareth not the loud winds when
 they call ;
 And moveth all together, if it move at
 all.

XII

At length, himself unsettling, he the pond
 Stirred with his staff, and fixedly did
 look
 Upon the muddy water, which he conned,
 As if he had been reading in a book :
 And now a stranger's privilege I took :
 And, drawing to his side, to him did
 say,
 " This morning gives us promise of a
 glorious day."

XIII

A gentle answer did the old Man make,
 In courteous speech which forth he
 slowly drew :
 " And him with further words I thus
 bespake,
 " What occupation do you there pur-
 sue ?
 This is a lonesome place for one like you."
 Ere he replied, a flash of mild surprise
 Broke from the sable orbs of his yet-
 vivid eyes

XIV

His words came feebly, from a feeble chest,
But each in solemn order followed each,
With something of a lofty utterance drest—
Choice word and measured phrase, above the reach
Of ordinary men; a stately speech;
Such as grave Livers do in Scotland use,
Religious men, who give to God and man their dues.

XV

He told, that to these waters he had come
To gather leeches, being old and poor;
Employment hazardous and wearisome!
And he had many hardships to endure:
From pond to pond he roamed, from moor to moor;
Housing, with God's good help, by choice or chance;
And in this way he gained an honest maintenance.

XVI

The old Man still stood talking by my side;
But now his voice to me was like a stream
Scarce heard; nor word from word could I divide;
And the whole body of the Man did seem
Like one whom I had met with in a dream;
Or like a man from some far region sent,
To give me human strength, by apt admonishment.

XVII

My former thoughts returned: the fear that kills;
And hope that is unwilling to be fed;
Cold, pain, and labour, and all fleshly ills;
And, mighty Poets in their misery dead.
—Perplexed, and longing to be comforted,
My question eagerly did I renew,
“How is it that you live, and what is it you do?”

XVIII

He with a smile did then his words repeat;
And said, that, gathering leeches, far and wide
He travelled; stirring thus about his feet
The waters of the pools where they abide.
“Once I could meet with them on every side;

But they have dwindled long by slow decay;
Yet still I persevere, and find them where I may.”

XIX

While he was talking thus, the lonely place,
The old Man's shape, and speech—all troubled me:
In my mind's eye I seemed to see him pace
About the weary moors continually,
Wandering about alone and silently.
While I these thoughts within myself pursued,
He, having made a pause, the same discourse renewed.

XX

And soon with this he other matters blended,
Cheerfully uttered, with demeanour kind,
But stately in the main; and when he ended,
I could have laughed myself to scorn to find
In that decrepit Man so firm a mind.
“God,” said I, “be my help and stay secure!”
I'll think of the Leech-gatherer on the lonely moor! 1807.

XXIII

THE THORN

I

“THERE is a Thorn—it looks so old,
In truth, you'd find it hard to say
How it could ever have been young,
It looks so old and grey.
Not higher than a two years' child
It stands erect, this aged Thorn;
No leaves it has, no prickly points;
It is a mass of knotted joints,
A wretched thing forlorn.
It stands erect, and like a stone
With lichens is it overgrown.

II

Like rock or stone, it is o'ergrown,
With lichens to the very top,
And hung with heavy tufts of moss,
A melancholy crop:
Up from the earth these mosses creep,
And this poor Thorn they clasp it round
So close, you'd say that they are bent
With plain and manifest intent
To drag it to the ground;
And all have joined in one endeavour
To bury this poor Thorn for ever.

III

High on a mountain's highest ridge,
Where oft the stormy winter gale

Cuts like a scythe, while through the clouds

It sweeps from vale to vale ;
Not five yards from the mountain path,
This Thorn you on your left espy ;
And to the left, three yards beyond,
You see a little muddy pond
Of water—never dry
Though but of compass small, and bare
To thirsty suns and parching air.

IV

And, close beside this aged Thorn,
There is a fresh and lovely sight,
A beauteous heap, a hill of moss,
Just half a foot in height.
All lovely colours there you see,
All colours that were ever seen ;
And mossy network too is there,
As if by hand of lady fair
The work had woven been ;
And cups, the darlings of the eye,
So deep is their vermilion dye.

V

Ah me ! what lovely tints are there
Of olive green and scarlet bright,
In spikes, in branches, and in stars,
Green, red, and pearly white !
This heap of earth o'ergrown with moss,
Which close beside the Thorn you see,
So fresh in all its beauteous dyes,
Is like an infant's grave in size,
As like as like can be :
But never, never any where,
An infant's grave was half so fair.

VI

Now would you see this aged Thorn,
This pond, and beauteous hill of moss,
You must take care and choose your time

The mountain when to cross.
For oft there sits between the heap
So like an infant's grave in size,
And that same pond of which I spoke,
A Woman in a scarlet cloak,
And to herself she cries,
'Oh misery ! oh misery !
Oh woe ! oh misery !'

VII

At all times of the day and night
This wretched Woman thither goes ;
And she is known to every star,
And every wind that blows ;
And there, beside the Thorn, she sits
When the blue daylight's in the skies,
And when the whirlwind's on the hill,
Or frosty air is keen and still,
And to herself she cries,
'Oh misery ! oh misery !
Oh woe ! oh misery !'

W.P.

VIII

"Now wherefore, thus, by day and night,
If rain, in tempest, and in snow,
T'us to the dreary mountain-top
Does this poor Woman go ?
And why sits she beside the Thorn
When the blue daylight's in the sky
Or when the whirlwind's on the hill,
Or frosty air is keen and still,
And wherefore does she cry ?—
O wherefore ? wherefore ? tell me why
Does she repeat that doleful cry ?"

IX

"I cannot tell ; I wish I could ;
For the true reason no one knows ;
But would you gladly view the spot,
The spot to which she goes ;
The hillock like an infant's grave,
The pond—and Thorn, so old and grey ;
Pass by her door—'tis seldom shut—
And, if you see her in her hut—
Then to the spot away !
I never heard of such as dare
Approach the spot when she is there."

X

"But wherefore to the mountain-top
Can this unhappy Woman go,
Whatever star is in the skies,
Whatever wind may blow ?"
"Full twenty years are past and gone
Since she (her name is Martha Ray)
Gave with a maiden's true good-will
Her company to Stephen Hill ;
And she was blithe and gay,
While friends and kindred all approved
Of him whom tenderly she loved.

XI

And they had fixed the wedding day,
The morning that must wed them both ;
But Stephen to another Maid
Had sworn another oath ;
And, with this other Maid, to church
Unthinking Stephen went—
Poor Martha ! on that woeeful day
A pang of piteous dismay
Into her soul was sent ;
A fire was kindled in her breast,
Which might not burn itself to rest.

XII

They say, full six months after this,
While yet the summer leaves were green,
She to the mountain-top would go,
And there was often seen.
What could she seek ?—or wish to hide ?
Her state to any eye was plain ;
She was with child, and she was mad ;
Yet often was she sober sad

From her exceeding pain.
O guilty Father—would that death
Had saved him from that breach of
faith!

XIII

Sad case for such a brain to hold
Communion with a stirring child!
Sad case, as you may think, for one
Who had a brain so wild!
Last Christmas-eve we talked of this,
And grey-haired Wilfred of the glen
Held that the unborn infant wrought
About its mother's heart, and brought
Her senses back again:
And, when at last her time drew near,
Her looks were calm, her senses clear.

XIV

More know I not, I wish I did,
And it should all be told to you:
For what became of this poor child
No mortal ever knew:
Nay—if a child to her was born
No earthly tongue could ever tell;
And if 'twas born alive or dead,
Far less could this with proof be said;
But some remember well,
That Martha Ray about this time
Would up the mountain often climb.

XV

And all that winter, when at night
The wind blew from the mountain-peak,
'Twas worth your while, though in the
dark,
The churchyard path to seek:
For many a time and oft were heard
Cries coming from the mountain-head:
Some plainly living voices were;
And others, I've heard many swear,
Were voices of the dead:
I cannot think, whate'er they say,
They had to do with Martha Ray.

XVI

But not she goes to this old Thorn,
The Thorn which I described to you,
And there sits in a scarlet cloak,
I will be sworn is true.
For one day with my telescope,
To view the ocean wide and bright,
When to this country first I came,
Ere I had heard of Martha's name,
I climbed the mountain's height:
A storm came on, and I could see
No object higher than my knee.

XVII

'Twas mist and rain, and storm and
rain:
No screen, no fence could I discover;
And then the wind! in sooth, it was
A wind full ten times over.

I looked around, I thought I saw
A jutting crag,—and off I ran,
Head-foremost, through the, driving
rain,
The shelter of the crag to gain;
And, as I am a man,
Instead of jutting crag, I found
A Woman seated on the ground.

XVIII

I did not speak—I saw her face;
Her face!—it was enough for me;
I turned about and heard her cry,
'Oh misery! oh misery!
And there she sits, until the moon
Through half the clear blue sky will go;
And, when the little breezes make
The waters of the pond to shake,
As all the country know,
She s'udders, and you hear her cry,
'Oh misery! oh misery!'

XIX

"But what's the Thorn? and what
the pond?
And what the hill of moss to her?
And what the preeping breeze that
comes
The little pond to stir?"
"I cannot tell; but some will say
She hanged her baby on the tree;
Some say she drowned it in the pond,
Which is a little step beyond:
But all and each agree,
The little Babe was buried there,
Beneath that hill of moss so fair.

XX

I've heard, the moss is spotted red
With drops of that poor infant's blood;
But kill a new-born infant thus,
I do not think she could!
Some say, if to the pond you go,
And fix on it a steady view,
The shadow of a babe you trace,
A baby and a baby's face,
And that it looks at you;
Whene'er you look on it, 'tis plain
The baby looks at you again.

XXI

And some had sworn an oath, that she
Should be to public justice brought;
And for the little infant's bones
With spades they would have sought.
But instantly the hill of moss
Before their eyes began to stir!
And, for full fifty yards around,
The grass—it shook upon the ground!
Yet all do still aver
The little Babe lies buried there,
Beneath that hill of moss so fair.

XXII

I cannot tell how this may be
But plain it is the Thorn is Round

With heavy tufts of moss that strive
To drag it to the ground ;
And this I know, full many a time,
When she was on the mountain high,
By day, and in the silent night,
When all the stars shone clear and
bright,
That I have heard her cry,
' O misery ! oh misery !
Oh woe is me ! oh misery ! ' "

1796.

XXIV

HART-LEAP WELL

Hart-Leap Well is a small spring of water, about five miles from Richmond in Yorkshire, and near the side of the road that leads from Richmond to Askridge. Its name is derived from a remarkable Chase, the memory of which is preserved by the monuments spoken of in the second Part of the following Poem, which monuments do now exist as I have there described them.

THE Knight had ridden down from
Wensley Moor
With the slow motion of a summer's
cloud

And now, as he approached a vassal's
door,
" Bring forth another horse ! " he cried
aloud.

" Another horse ! "—That shout the
vassal heard
And saddled his best Steed, a comely
grey ;
Sir Walter mounted him ; he was the
third
Which he had mounted on that glorious
day.

Joy sparkled in the prancing courser's
eyes ;
The horse and horseman are a happy
pair ;
But, though Sir Walter like a falcon
flies,
There is a doleful silence in the air.

A rout this morning left Sir Walter's
Hall
That as they galloped made the echoes
roar ;
But horse and man are vanished, one
and all ;
Such race, I think, was never seen
before.

Sir Walter, restless as a veering wind,
Calls to the few tired dogs that yet re-
main :
Blanch, Swift, and Music, noblest of
their kind,
Follow, and up the weary mountain
strain.

The Knight hallooed, he cheered and
chid them on
With suppliant gestures and upbraid-
ings stern ;
But breath and eyesight fail ; and, one
by one,
The dogs are stretched among the
mountain fern.

Where is the throng, the tumult of the
race ?
The bugles that so joyfully were blown ?
—This chase it looks not like an
earthly chase ;
Sir Walter and the Hart are left alone.

The poor Hart toils along the moun-
tain-side :
I will not stop to tell how far he fled,
Nor will I mention by what death he
died :
But now the Knight beholds him lying
dead.

Dismounting, then, he leaned against
a thorn :
He had no follower, dog, nor man, nor
boy :
He neither cracked his whip, nor blew
his horn,
But gazed upon the spoil with silent joy.

Close to the thorn on which Sir Walter
leaned,
Stood his dumb partner in this glorious
feat :
Weak as a lamb the hour that it is
yeaned ;
And white with foam as if with cleav-
ing sleet.

Upon his side the Hart was lying
stretched :
His nostril touched a spring beneath
a hill,
And with the last deep groan his breath
had fetched
The waters of the spring were trembling
still.

And now, too happy for repose or rest,
(Never had living man such joyful lot !)
Sir Walter walked all round, north,
south, and west,
And gazed and gazed upon that darling
spot.

And climbing up the hill—(it was at
least
Four roods of sheer ascent) Sir Walter
found
Three several hoof-marks which the
hunted Beast
Had left imprinted on the grassy ground.

Sir Walter wiped his face, and cried,
"Till now

Such sight was never seen by human
eyes :

Three leaps have borne him from this
lofty brow,

Down to the very fountain where he lies.

I'll build a pleasure-house upon this
spot,

And a small arbour, made for rural joy ;
'Twill be the traveller's shed, the pil-
grim's cot,

A place of love for damsels that are coy.

A cunning artist will I have to frame
A basin for that fountain in the dell !

And they who do make mention of the
same,

From this day forth, shall call it HART-
LEAP WELL.

And, gallant Stag ! to make thy praises
known,

Another monument shall here be raised ;
Three several pillars, each a rough-
hewn stone.

And planted where thy hoofs the turf
have grazed.

And, in the summer-time when days
are long,

I will come hither with my Paramour ;
And with the dancers and the minstrel's
song

We will make merry in that pleasant
bower.

Till the foundations of the mountains
fall

My mansion with its arbour shall en-
dure :—

The joy of them who till the fields of
Swale,

And them who dwell among the woods
of Ure !

Then home he went, and left the Hart,
stone-dead,

With breathless nostrils stretched above
the spring.

—Soon did the Knight perform what
he had said ;

And far and wide the fame thereof did
ring.

Ere thrice the Moon into her port had
steered,

A cup of stone received the living well ;
Three pillars of rude stone Sir Walter
reared,

And built a house of pleasure in the dell.

And near the fountain, flowers of stature
tall

With trailing plants and trees were in-
tertwined,—

Which soon composed a little sylvan
hall.

A leafy shelter from the sun and wind.
And thither, when the summer days
were long

Sir Walter led his wondering Paramour ;
And with the dancers and the minstrel's
song

Made merriment within that pleasant
bower.

The Knight, Sir Walter, died in course
of time.

And his bones lie in his paternal vale.—
But there is matter for a second rhyme,
And I to this would add another tale.

PART SECOND

THE moving accident is not my trade .
To freeze the blood I have no ready arts :
'Tis my delight, alone in summer shade,
To pipe a simple song for thinking
hearts.

As I from Hawes to Richmond did re-
pair,

It chanced that I saw standing in a dell
Three aspens at three corners of a square ;
And one, not four yards distant, near
a well.

What this imported I could ill divine ;
And, pulling now the rein my horse
to stop,

I saw three pillars standing in a line,—
The last stone pillar on a dark hill-top.

The trees were grey, with neither arms
nor head ;

Half wasted the square mound of tawny
green ;

So that you just might say, as then I
said,

"Here in old time the hand of man
hath been."

I looked upon the hill both far and near,
More doleful place did never eye survey ;
It seemed as if the spring-time came not
here.

And Nature here were willing to decay.

I stood in various thoughts and fancies
lost,

When one, who was in shepherd's garb
attired

Came up the hollow :—hfm did I accost,
And what this place might be I then
inquired.

The Shepherd stopped, and that same
story told

Which in my former rhyme I have re-
hearsed.

"A jolly place," said he, "in times of
old !

But something ails it now? the spot
is curst.

You see these lifeless stumps of aspen
wood—

Some say that they are beeches, others
elms—

These were the bower ; and here a man-
sion stood,

The finest palace of a hundred realms !

The arbour does its own condition tell ;
You see the stones, the fountain, and
the stream ;

But as to the great Lodge ! you might
as well

Hunt half a day for a forgotten dream.

There's neither dog nor heifer, horse
nor sheep,

Will wet his lips within that cup of
stone ;

And oftentimes, when all are fast asleep,
This water doth send forth a dolorous
groan.

Some say that here a murder has been
done,

And blood cries out for blood ; but,
for my part,

I've guessed, when I've been sitting in
the sun,

That it was all for that unhappy Hart.

What thoughts must through the crea-
ture's brain have past !

Even from the topmost stone, upon the
steep,

Are but three bounds—and look, Sir,
at this last—

O Master ! it has been a cruel leap.

For thirteen hours he ran a desperate
race ;

And in my simple mind we cannot tell
What cause the Hart might have to love
this place.

And come and make his death-bed near
the well.

Here on the grass perhaps asleep he
sank,

Lulled by the fountain in the summer-
tide ;

This water was perhaps the first he
drank

When he had wandered from his
mother's side.

In April here beneath the flowering thorn
He heard the birds their morning carols
sing ;

And he, perhaps, for aught we know,
was born

Not half a furlong from that self-same
spring.

Now, here is neither grass nor pleasant
shade ;

The sun on drearier hollow never shone ;

So will it be, as I have often said,
Till trees, and stones, and fountain, all
are gone."

"Grey-headed Shepherd, thou hast
spoken well ;

Small difference lies between thy creed
and mine :

This Beast not unobserved by Nature
fell ;

His death was mourned by sympathy
divine.

The Being, that is in the clouds and air,
That is in the green leaves among the
groves,

Maintains a deep and reverential care
For the unoffending creatures whom
he loves.

The pleasure-house is dust—behind,
before,

This is no common waste, no common
gloom ;

But Nature, in due course of time, once
more

Shall here put on her beauty and her
bloom.

She leaves these objects to a slow decay,
That what we are, and have been, may
be known ;

But at the coming of the milder day,
These monuments shall all be overgrown.

One lesson, Shepherd, let us two divide,
Taught both by what she shows, and
what conceals ;

Never to blend our pleasure or our pride
With sorrow of the meanest thing that
feels."

1800.

XXV

SONG AT THE FEAST OF BROUGHAM CASTLE,

UPON THE RESTORATION OF LORD CLIF-
FORD, THE SHEPHERD, TO THE
ESTATES AND HONOURS OF HIS
ANCESTORS

High in the breathless Hall the Minstrel
sate,

And Emont's murmur mingled with
the Song—

The words of ancient time I thus trans-
late,

A festal strain that hath been silent
long :—

"From town to town, from tower
to tower,

The red rose is a gladsome flower.

Her thirty years of winter past,

The red rose is revived at last ;

She lifts her head for endless spring,

For everlasting blossoming :

Both roses flourish, red and white :
 In love and sisterly delight
 The two that were at strife are blended,
 And all old troubles now are ended.—
 Joy ! joy to both ! but most to her
 Who is the flower of Lancaster !
 Behold her how She smiles to-day
 On this great throng, this bright array !
 Fair greeting doth she send to all
 From every corner of the hall ;
 But chiefly from above the board
 Where sits in state our rightful Lord,
 A Clifford to his own restored !

They came with banner, spear,
 and shield

And it was proved in Basworth-field ;
 Not long the Avenger was withstood—
 Earth helped him with the cry of
 blood :

St. George was for us, and the night
 Of blessed Angels crowned the right.
 Loud voice the Land has uttered forth,
 We loudest in the faithful north :
 Our fields rejoice, our mountains ring,
 Our streams proclaim a welcoming ;
 Our strong-abodes and castles see
 The glory of their loyalty.

How glad is Skipton at this hour—
 Though lonely, a deserted Tower ;
 Knight, squire, and yeoman, page
 and groom :

We have them at the feast of Brough'm.
 How glad Pendragon—though the
 sleep

Of years be on her !—She shall reap
 A taste of this great pleasure, viewing
 As in a dream her own renewing.
 Rejoiced is Brough, right glad I deem
 Beside her little humble stream ;
 And she that keepeth watch and ward
 Her statelier Eden's course to guard ;
 They both are happy at this hour,
 Though each is but a lonely Tower :—
 But here is perfect joy and pride

For one fair House by Emont's side,
 This day, distinguished without peer
 To see her Master and to cheer—
 Him, and his Lady-mother dear !

Oh ! it was a time forlorn
 When the fatherless was born—
 Give her wings that she may fly,
 Or she sees her infant die !
 Swords that are with slaughter wild
 Hunt the Mother and the Child.
 Who will take them from the light ?
 —Yonder is a man in sight—
 Yonder is a house—but where ?
 No, they must not enter there.
 To the caves, and to the brooks,
 To the clouds of heaven she looks ;
 She is speechless, but her eyes
 Pray in ghostly agonies.

Blissful Mary, Mother mild,
 Maid and Mother undefiled,
 Save a Mother and her Child !

Now Who is he that bounds with
 joy
 On Carrock's side, a Shepherd-boy ?
 No thoughts hath he but thoughts
 that pass
 Light as the wind along the grass.
 Can this be He who hither came
 In secret, like a smothered flame ?
 O'er whom such thankful tears were
 shed

For shelter, and a poor man's bread !
 God loves the Child ; and God hath
 *willed
 That those dear words should be
 fulfilled,

The Lady's words, when forced away
 The last she to her Babe did say :
 ' My own, my own, thy Fellow-guest
 I may not be, but rest thee, rest,
 For lowly shepherd's life is best ! '

Alas ! when evil men are strong
 No life is good, no pleasure long,
 The Boy must part from Mosedale's
 groves,

And leave Blencathara's rugged coves,
 And quit the flowers that summer
 brings

To Glendaramakin's lofty springs ;
 Must vanish, and his careless cheer
 Be turned to heaviness and fear.
 —Give Sir Lancelot Threlkeld praise !
 Hear it, good man, old in days !
 Thou tree of covert and of rest
 For this young Bird that is distressed ;
 Among thy branches safe he lay,
 And he was free to sport and play,
 When falcons were abroad for prey.

A recreant harp, that sings of fear
 And heaviness in Clifford's ear !
 I said, when evil men are strong,
 No life is good, no pleasure long,
 A weak and cowardly untruth !
 Our Clifford was a happy Youth,
 And thankful through a weary time,
 That brought him up to manhood's
 prime.

—Again he wanders forth at will,
 And tends a flock from hill to hill ;
 His garb is humble ; ne'er was seen
 Such garb with such a noble mien ;
 Among the shepherd grooms no mate
 Hath he, a Child of strength and
 state !

Yet lacks not friends for simple glee,
 Nor yet for higher sympathy.
 To his side the fellow-peer
 Came, and rested without fear ;
 The eagle, lord of land and sea,
 Stooped down to pay him fealty ;

And both the undying fish that swim
Through Bowscale-tarn did wait on
him;

The pair were servants of his eye
In their immortality;
And glancing, gleaming, dark or
bright,

Moved to and fro, for his delight.
He knew the rocks which Angels haunt
Upon the mountains visitant;
He hath kenned them taking wing:
And into caves where Faeries sing
He hath entered; and been told
By Voices how men lived of old.
Among the heavens his eye can see
The face of thing that is to be;
And, if that men report him right,
His tongue could whisper words of
might.

—Now another day is come,
After hope, and nobler doom;
He hath thrown aside his crook,
And hath buried deep his book:
Armour rusting in his halls
On the blood of Clifford calls:—
'Quell the Scot,' exclaims the Lance—
Bear me to the heart of France,
Is the longing of the Shield—
Tell thy name, thou trembling Field;
Field of death, where'er thou be,
Groan thou with our victory!
Happy day, and mighty hour,
When our Shepherd, in his power,
Mailed and horsed, with lance and
sword,
To his ancestors restored
Like a re-appearing Star,
Like a glory from afar,
First shall head the flock of war!"

Alas! the impassioned minstrel did not
know

How, by Heaven's grace, this Clifford's
heart was framed:

How he, long forced in humble walks to go,
Was softened into feeling, soothed, and
tamed.

Love had he found in huts where poor
men lie;

His daily teachers had been woods and
rills,

The silence that is in the starry sky,
The sleep that is among the lonely hills,
In him the savage virtue of the Race,
Revenge, and all ferocious thoughts
were dead:

Nor did he change; but kept in lofty
place

The wisdom which adversity had bred.
Glad were the vales, and every cottage-
hearth;

The Shepherd-Lord was honoured more
and more;

And, ages after he was laid in earth,
"The good Lord Clifford" was the name
he bore. 1807.

XXVI

LINES

COMPOSED A FEW MILES ABOVE TINTERN
ABBEY, ON REVISITING THE BANKS
OF THE WYE DURING A TOUR.

JULY 13, 1798

Five years have past; five summers,
with the length

Of five long winters! and again I hear
These waters, rolling from their moun-
tain-springs

With a soft inland murmur.¹ — Once
again

Do I behold these steep and lofty cliffs,
That on a wild secluded scene impress
Thoughts of more deep seclusion; and
connect

The landscape with the quiet of the sky.
The day is come when I again repose

Here, under this dark sycamore, and
view

These plots of cottage-ground, these
orchard-tufts,

Which at this season, with their unripe
fruits,

Are clad in one green hue, and lose
themselves

'Mid groves and copses. Once again I
see

These hedge-rows, hardly hedge-rows,
little lines

Of sportive wood run wild: these pas-
toral farms,

Green to the very door; and wreaths of
smoke

Sent up, in silence, from among the trees!
With some uncertain notice, as might

Of seem

Of vagrant dwellers in the houseless
woods,

Or of some Hermit's cave, where by his
fire

The Hermit sits alone.

These beauteous forms,
Through a long absence, have not been
to me

As is a landscape to a blind man's eye:
But oft, in lonely rooms, and 'mid the din

Of towns and cities, I have owed to them
In hours of weariness, sensations sweet,

Felt in the blood, and felt along the
heart;

And passing even into my purer mind,
With tranquil restoration:—feelings too

Of unremembered pleasure: such, per-
haps,

¹ The river is not affected by the tides a few
miles above Tintern.

As have no slight or trivial influence
 On that best portion of a good man's life,
 His little, nameless, unremembered,
 acts
 Of kindness and of love. Nor less, I
 trust,
 To them I may have owed another gift,
 Of aspect more sublime; that blessed
 mood,
 In which the burthen of the mystery,
 In which the heavy and the weary
 weight
 Of all this unintelligible world,
 Is lightened:—that serene and blessed
 mood,
 In which the affections gently lead us
 on,—
 Until, the breath of this corporeal frame
 And even the motion of our human blood
 Almost suspended, we are laid asleep
 In body, and become a living soul:
 While with an eye made quiet by the
 power
 Of harmony, and the deep power of joy,
 We see into the life of things.

If this
 Be but a vain belief, yet, oh! how oft—
 In darkness and amid the many shapes
 Of joyless daylight; when the fretful stir
 Unprofitable, and the fever of the
 world,
 Have hung upon the beatings of my
 heart—
 How oft, in spirit, have I turned to thee,
 O sylvan Wye! thou wanderer thro' the
 woods,
 How often has my spirit turned to thee!

And now, with gleams of half-extin-
 guished thought,
 With many recognitions dim and faint,
 And somewhat of a sad perplexity,
 The picture of the mind revives again:
 While here I stand, not only with the
 sense
 Of present pleasure, but with pleasing
 thoughts
 That in this moment there is life and
 food
 For future years. And so I dare to
 hope,
 Though changed, no doubt, from what I
 was when first
 I came among these hills; when like a
 roe
 I bounded o'er the mountains, by the
 sides
 Of the deep rivers, and the lonely
 streams,
 Wherever nature led: more like a man
 Flying from something that he dreads,
 than one
 Who sought the thing he loved. For
 nature then

(The coarser pleasures of my boyish
 days,
 And their glad animal movements all
 gone by)
 To me was all in all.—I cannot paint
 What then I was. The sounding
 cataract
 Haunted me like a passion: the tall
 rock,
 The mountain, and the deep and gloomy
 wood,
 Their colours and their forms, were then
 to me
 An appetite; a feeling and a love,
 That had no need of a remoter charm,
 By thought supplied, nor any interest
 Unborrowed from the eye.—That time
 is past,
 And all its aching joys are now no more,
 And all its dizzy raptures. Not for this
 Faint I, nor mourn nor murmur; other
 gifts
 Have followed; for such loss, I would
 believe,
 Abundant recompence. For I have
 learned
 To look on nature, not as in the hour
 Of thoughtless youth; but hearing
 oftentimes
 The still sad music of humanity,
 Nor harsh nor grating, though of ample
 power
 To chasten and subdue. And I have
 felt
 A presence that disturbs me with the
 joy
 Of elevated thoughts; a sense sublime
 Of something far more deeply inter-
 fused,
 Whose dwelling is the light of setting
 suns,
 And the round ocean and the living air,
 And the blue sky, and in the mind of
 man:
 A motion and a spirit, that impels
 All thinking things, all objects of all
 thought,
 And rolls through all things. Therefore
 am I still
 A lover of the meadows and the woods,
 And mountains; and of all that we
 behold
 From this green earth; of all the mighty
 world
 Of eye and ear,—both what they half
 create,¹
 And what perceive; well pleased to
 recognise
 In nature and the language of the sense,
 The anchor of my purest thoughts, the
 nurse,

¹ This line has a close resemblance to an
 admirable line of Young's, the exact expression
 of which I do not recollect.

The guide, the guardian of my heart,
and soul
Of all my moral being.

Nor perchance,
If I were not thus taught, should I the
more

Suffer my genial spirits to decay :
For thou art with me here upon the
banks

Of this fair river : thou my dearest
Friend,

My dear, dear Friend ; and in thy voice
I catch

The language of my former heart, and
read

My former pleasures in the shooting
lights

Of thy wild eyes. Oh ! yet a little
while

May I behold in thee what I was once,
My dear, dear Sister ! and this prayer
I make.

Knowing that Nature never did betray
The heart that loved her ; 'tis her
privilege,

Through all the years of this our life, to
lead

From joy to joy : for she can so inform
The mind that is within us, so impress
With quietness and beauty, and so feed
With lofty thoughts, that neither evil
tongues,

Rash judgments, nor the sneers of selfish
men,

Nor greetings where no kindness is, nor
all

The dreary intercourse of daily life,
Shall e'er prevail against us, or disturb
Our cheerful faith, that all which we
behold

Is full of blessings. Therefore let the
moon

Shine on thee in thy solitary walk :
And let the misty mountain-winds be free

To blow against thee : and, in after
years,

When these wild ecstasies shall be
matured

Into a sober pleasure ; when thy mind
Shall be a mansion for all lovely forms,
Thy memory be as a dwelling-place

For all sweet sounds and harmonies ; oh !
then,

If solitude, or fear, or pain, or grief,
Should be thy portion, with what healing
thoughts

Of tender joy wilt thou remember me,
And these my exhortations ! Nor, per-
chance—

If I should be where I no more can hear
Thy voice, nor catch from thy wild eyes
these gleams

Of past existence—wilt thou then forget

That on the banks of this delightful
stream

We stood together ; and that I, so long
A worshipper of Nature, hither came
Unwearied in that service : rather say
With warmer love—oh ! with far deeper
zeal

Of holier love. Nor wilt thou then
forget,

That after many wanderings, many
years

Of absence, these steep woods and
lofty cliffs,

And this green pastoral landscape, were
to me

More dear, both for themselves and for
thy sake !

XXVII

1798.

It is no Spirit who from heaven hath
flown,

And is descending on his embassy ;
Nor Traveller gone from earth the
heavens to espy !

'Tis Hesperus—there he stands with
glittering crown.

First admonition that the sun is down !
For yet it is broad day-light : clouds pass
by ;

A few are near him still—and now the
sky.

He hath it to himself—'tis all his own.
O most ambitious Star ! an inquest
wrought

Within me when I recognised thy light ;
A moment I was startled at the sight :

And, while I gazed, there came to me a
thought

That I might step beyond my natural
race

As thou seem'st now to do ; might one
day trace

Some ground not mine ; and, strong her
strength above,

My Soul, an Apparition in the place,
Tread there with steps that no one shall
reprove.

1803.

XXVIII

FRENCH REVOLUTION

AS IT APPEARED TO ENTHUSIASTS AT ITS
COMMENCEMENT¹ REPRINTED FROM
"THE FRIEND"

Oh ! pleasant exercise of hope and joy !
For mighty were the auxiliars which
then stood

Upon our side, we who were strong in
love !

¹ This and the Extract, page 72, and the
first Piece of this Class, page 148, are from the
unpublished Poem of which some account is
given in the Preface to the EXCURSION.

Bliss was it in that dawn to be alive,
But to be young was very heaven!—
Oh! times,

In which the meagre, stale, forbidding
ways

Of custom, law, and statute, took at once
The attraction of a country in romance!
When Reason seemed the most to assert
her rights,

When most intent on making of herself
A prince Enchantress—to assist the work,
Which then was going forward in her
name!

Not favoured spots alone, but the whole
earth,
The beauty wore of promise; that which
sets

(As at some moment might not be unfelt
Among the bowers of paradise itself)
The budding rose above the rose full
blown.

What temper at the prospect did not wake
To happiness unthought of? The inert
Were roused, and lively natures rapt
away!

They who had fed their childhood upon
dreams,

The playfellows of fancy, who had made
All powers of swiftness, subtilty, and
strength

Their ministers,—who in lordly wise had
stirred

Among the grandest objects of the sense,
And dealt with whatsoever they found
there

As if they had within some lurking right
To wield it:—they, too, who, of gentle
mood,

Had watched all gentle motions, and to
these

Had fitted their own thoughts, schemers
more mild,

And in the region of their peaceful
selves;—

Now was it that both found, the meek
and lofty

And find, helpers to their heart's
desire,

And stuff at hand, plastic as they could
wish;

Were called upon to exercise their skill,
Not in Utopia, subterranean fields,
Or some secreted island, Heaven knows
where!

But in the very world, which is the world
Of all of us,—the place where in the end
We find our happiness, or not at all!

1805.

XXIX

Yes, it was the mountain Echo,
Solitary, clear, profound,
Answering to the shouting Cuckoo,
Giving to her sound for sound!

Unsolicited reply

To a babbling wanderer sent;

Like her ordinary cry,

Like—but oh, how different!

Hears not also mortal Life?

Hear not we, unthinking Creatures!

Slaves of folly, love, or strife—

Voices of two different natures?

Have not we too?—yes, we have
Answers, and we know not whence;
Echoes from beyond the grave,
Recognised intelligence!

Such rebounds our inward ear
Catches sometimes from afar—
Listen, ponder, hold them dear;
For of God,—of God they are.

1806.

XXX

TO A SKY-LARK

ETHEREAL minstrel! pilgrim of the sky!
Dost thou despise the earth where
cares abound?

Or, while the wings aspire, are heart
and eye

Both with thy nest upon the dewy
ground?

Thy nest which thou canst drop into
at will,

Those quivering wings composed, that
music still!

Leave to the nightingale her shady wood;
A privacy of glorious light is thine:

Whence thou dost pour upon the world
a flood

Of harmony, with instinct more divine;
Type of the wise who soar, but never
roam;

True to the kindred points of Heaven
and Home!

1825.

XXXI

LAODAMIA

"With sacrifice before the rising morn
Vows have I made by fruitless hope
inspired;

And from the infernal Gods, 'mid shades
forlorn

Of night, my slaughtered Lord have
I required:

Celestial pity I again implore;—

Restore him to my sight—great Jove,
restore!"

So speaking, and by fervent love
endowed

With faith, the Suppliant heavenward
lifts her hands;

While, like the sun emerging from a cloud,
Her countenance brightens—and her
eye expands;

Her bosom heaves and spreads, her
stature grows ;
And she expects the issue in repose.

O terror ! what hath she perceived ?—
Q joy !

What doth she look on ?—whom doth
she behold ?

Her Hero slain upon the beach of Troy ?
His vital presence ? his corporal
mould ?

It is—if sense deceive her not—'tis He !
And a God leads him, winged Mercury !

Mild Hermes spake—and touched her
with his wand

That calms all fear ; " Such grace hath
crowned thy prayer,

Laodamia ! that at Jove's command
Thy Husband walks the paths of upper
air :

He comes to tarry with thee three
hours' space ;

Accept the gift, behold him face to
face ! "

Forth sprang the impassioned Queen
her Lord to clasp,

Again that consummation she essayed ;
But unsubstantial Form eludes her grasp

As often as that eager grasp was made.
The Phantom parts—but parts to re-
unite,

And re-assume his place before her sight.

" Protesilaus, lo ! thy guide is gone !
Confirm, I pray, the vision with thy
voice :

This is our palace,—yonder is thy
throne ;

Speak, and the floor thou tread'st on
will rejoice.

Not to appal me have the gods bestowed
This precious boon ; and blest a sad
abode."

" Great Jove, Laodamia ! doth not
leave

His gifts imperfect :—Spectre though
I be,

I am not sent to scare thee or deceive ;
But in reward of thy fidelity.

And something also did my worth
obtain ;

For fearless virtue bringeth boundless
gain."

Thou knowest, the Delphic, oracle
foretold

That the first Greek who touched the
Trojan strand

Should die ; but me the threat could
not withhold :

A generous cause a victim did demand ;
And forth I leapt upon the sandy plain ;
A self-devoted chief—by Hector slain."

" Supreme of Heroes—bravest, noblest,
best !

Thy matchless courage I bewail no more,
Which then, when tens of thousands
were deprest

By doubt, propelled thee to the fatal
shore ;

Thou found'st—and I forgive thee—
here thou art—

A nobler counsellor than my poor heart,
But thou, though capable of sterner
deed,

Wert kind as resolute, and good as
brave ;

And he, whose power restores thee,
hath decreed

Thou should'st elude the malice of the
grave :

Redundant are thy locks, thy lips as fair
As when their breath enriched Thessa-
lian air.

No Spectre greets me,—no vain Shadow
this ;

Come, blooming Hero, place thee by
my side !

Give, on this well known couch, one
nuptial kiss

To me, this day, a second time thy
bride ! "

Jove frowned in heaven : the conscious
Parcæ threw

Upon those roseate lips a Stygian hue.

" This visage tells thee that my doom
is past :

Nor should the change be mourned,
even if the joys

Of sense were able to return as fast
And surely as they vanish. Earth

destroys
Those raptures duly—Erebus disdains ;

Calm pleasures there abide—majestic
pains.

Be taught, O faithful Consort, to control
Rebellious passion : for the Gods approve

The depth, and not the tumult.
soul ;

A fervent, not ungovernable, love.
Thy transports moderate ; and meekly

mourn
When I depart, for brief is my sojourn—"

" Ah, wherefore ?—Did not Hercules
by force

Wrest from the guardian Monster of
the tomb

Alcestis, a reanimated corse,
Given back to dwell on earth in vernal

bloom ?
Medea's spells dispersed the weight of

years,
And Jason stood a youth 'mid youthful

peers,

The Gods to us are merciful—and they
Yet further may relent : for mightier far
Than strength of nerve and sinew, or
the sway

Of magic potent over sun and star,
Is love, though oft to agony distressed,
And though his favourite seat be feeble
woman's breast.

But if thou goest, I follow—" " Peace ! "
he said,—

She looked upon him and was calmed
and cheered ;

The ghastly colour from his lips had fled ;
In his deportment, -shape, and mien,
appeared

Elysian beauty, melancholy grace,
Brought from a pensive though a happy
place.

He spake of love, such love as Spirits feel
In worlds whose course is equable and
pure ;

No fears to beat away—no strife to
heal—

The past unsighed for, and the future
sure ;

Spake of heroic arts in graver mood
Revived, with finer harmony pursued ;

Of all that is most beautiful—imaged
there

In happier beauty ; more pellucid
streams,

An ampler ether, a diviner air,
And fields invested with purpureal
gleams ;

Climes which the sun, who sheds the
brightest day

Earth knows, is all unworthy to survey.

Yet there the Soul shall enter which hath
earned

That privilege by virtue.—" Ill," said he
" The end of man's existence I discerned,

Who from ignoble games and revelry
Could draw, when we had parted, vain
delight,

—~~These~~ years were thy best pastime, day
and night ;

And while my youthful peers before my
eyes

(Each hero following his peculiar bent)
Prepared themselves for glorious enter-
prise

By martial sports,—or, seated in the
tent,

Chieftains and kings in council were
detained ;

What time the fleet at Aulis lay en-
chained.

The wished-for wind was given :—I
then revolved

The oracle, upon the silent sea ;

And, if no worthier led the way, resolved,
That, of a thousand vessels, mine should
be

The foremost prow in pressing to the
strand,—

Mine the first blood that tinged the
Trojan sand.

Yet bitter, oft-times bitter, was the
pang

When of thy loss I thought, beloved
Wife !

On thee too fondly did my memory
hang,

And on the joys we shared in mortal
life,—

The paths which we had trod—these
fountains, flowers :

My new-planned cities, and unfinished
towers.

But should suspense permit the Foe
to cry,

' Behold they tremble !—haughty their
array,

Yet of their number none dares to die ? '
In soil I swept the indignity away :

Old frailties then recurred :—but lofty
thought,

In act embodied, my deliverance
wrought.

And Thou, though strong in love, art
all too weak

In reason, in self-government too slow ;
I counsel thee by fortitude to seek

Our blest re-union in the shades below.
The invisible world with thee hath
sympathised ;

Be thy affections raised and solemnised.

Learn, by a mortal yearning, to ascend—
Seeking a higher object. Love was
given.

Encouraged, sanctioned, chiefly for
that end ;

For this the passion to excess was
driven—

That self might be annulled : her
bondage prove

The fetters of a dream, opposed to
love."—

Aloud she shrieked ! for Hermes
re-appears !

Round the dear Shade she would have
clung—'tis vain :

The hours are past—too brief had they
been years ;

And him no mortal effort can detain :
Swift, toward the realms that know
not earthly day,

He through the portal takes his silent
way,

And on the palace-floor a lifeless corpse
She lay.

Thus, all in vain exhorted and reproved,
She perished ; and, as for a wilful trime,
By the just Gods whom no weak pity
moved.

Was doomed to wear out her appointed
time.

Apart from happy Ghosts, that gather
flowers

Of blissful quiet 'mid unfading bowers

—Yet tears to human suffering are due ;
And mortal hopes defeated and o'er-
thrown

Are mourned by man, and not by man
alone,

As fondly he believes.—Upon the side
Of Hellas' pont (such faith was entertained)

A knot of spiry trees for ages grey

From out the tomb of him for whom she
died ;

And ever, when such stature they had
gained

That Ilium's walls were subject to their
view.

The trees' tall summits withered at the
A constant interchange, of growth and
blight !

1814.

XXXII

DION

(SEE PLUTARCH)

I

SERENE, and fitted to embrace,
Where'er he turned, a swan-like grace
Of haughtiness without pretence,
And to unfold a still magnificence.
Was princely Dion, in the power
And beauty of his happier hour.
And what pure homage then did wait
On Dion's virtues, while the lunar beam
Of Plato's genius, from its lofty sphere,
Fell round him in the grove of Academe,
Softening their inbred dignity austere—

That he, not too elate

With self-sufficing solitude,

But with majestic lowliness endued,

Might in the universal bosom reign,

And from affectionate observance gain
Help, under every change of adverse fate.

II

Five thousand warriors—O the raptu-
rous day !

Each crowned with flowers, and armed
with spear and shield,

¹ For the account of these long-lived trees,
see Pliny's *Natural History*, lib. xvi. cap. 44 ;
and for the features in the character of Pro-
teus see the Iphigenia in Aulis of Euripides.
Virgil places the Shade of Laodamia in a mourn-
ful region, among unhappy Lovers,

—His Laodamia

It Comes, —

Or ruder weapon which their course
might yield,

To Syracuse advance in bright array.

Who leads them on?—The anxious
people see

Long-exiled Dion marching at their head
He also crowned with flowers of Sicily,
And in a white, far-beaming, corslet
clad !

Pure transport undisturbed by doubt
or fear

The gazers feel ; and, rushing to the
plain.

Salute those strangers as a holy train
Or blest procession (to the Immortals
dear)

That brought their precious liberty
again.

Lo ! when the gates are entered, on each
hand,

Down the long street, rich goblets filled
with wine

In seemly order stand,

On tables set, as if for rites divine ;—
And, as the great Deliverer marches by,

He looks on festal ground with fruits
bestrown ;

And flowers are on his person thrown

In boundless prodigality :

Nor doth the general voice abstain from
prayer,

Invoking Dion's tutelary care,

As if a very Deity he were !

III

Mourn, hills and groves of Attica ! and
mourn

Ilissus, bending o'er thy classic urn !

Mourn, and lament for him whose spirit
dreads

Your once sweet memory, studious
walks and shades !

For him who to divinity aspired,
Not on the breath of popular applause,

But through dependence on the sacred
laws

Framed in the schools where Wisdom
dwelt retired,

Intent to trace the ideal path of right
(More fair than heaven's broad cause-
way paved with stars)

Which Dion learned to measure with
sublime delight ;—

But He hath overleaped the eternal
bars ;

And, following guides whose craft holds
no consent

With aught that breathes the ethereal
element,

Hath stained the robes of civil power
with blood,

Unjustly shed, though for the public
good.

Whence doubts that came too late, and
wishes vain,
Hollow excuses, and triumphant pain ;
And oft his cogitations sink as low
As, through the abysses of a joyless
heart,
The heaviest plummet of despair can go—
But whence that sudden check ? that
fearful start !

He hears an uncouth sound—
Anon his lifted eyes
Saw, at a long-drawn gallery's dusky
bound,
A Shape of more than mortal size
And hideous aspect, stalking round and
round !

A woman's garb the Phantom wore,
And fiercely swept the marble floor,—
Like Auster whirling to and fro ;
His force on Caspian foam to try ;
Or Boreas when he scours the snow
That skins the plains of Thessaly,
Or when aloft on Mænalus he stops
His flight, 'mid eddying pine-tree tops !

IV

So, but from toil less sign of profit reap-
ing,
The sullen Spectre to her purpose bowed,
Sweeping—vehemently sweeping—
No pause admitted, no design avowed !
"Avaunt, inexplicable Guest!—avaunt,"
Exclaimed the Chieftain—"let me
rather see
The coronal that coiling vipers make ;
The torch that flames with many a lurid
flame,
And the long train of doleful pageantry
Which they behold, whom vengeful
Furies haunt ;
Who, while they struggle from the
scourge to flee,
Move where the blasted soil is not un-
worn,
And, in their anguish, bear what other
minds have borne !"

V

But Shapes that come not at an earthly
call,
Will not depart when mortal voices bid ;
Lords of the visionary eye whose lid,
Once raised, remains agast, and will
not fall !
Ye Gods, thought He, that servile Im-
plement
Obeys a mystical intent !
Your Minister would brush away
The spots that to my soul adhere ;
But should she labour night and day,
They will not, cannot disappear ;
Whence angry perturbations,—and that
look
Which no Philosophy can brook !

VI

Ill-fated Chief ! there are whose hopes
are built
Upon the ruins of thy glorious name ;
Who, through the portal of one mo-
ment's guilt,
Pursue thee with their deadly aim !
O matchless perfidy ! portentous lust
Of monstrous crime !—that horror-
striking blade,
Drawn in defiance of the Gods, hath laid
The noble Syracusan low in dust !
Shudder'd the walls—the marble city
wept—
And sylvan places heaved a pensive
sigh ;
But in calm peace the appointed Victim
slept,
As he had fallen in magnanimity ;
Of spirit too capacious to require,
That Destiny her course should change ;
too just
To his own native greatness to desire
That wretched boon, days lengthened
by mistfast.
So were the, hopeless troubles, that in-
volved,
The soul of Dion, instantly dissolved.
Released from life and cares of princely
state,
He left this moral grafted on his Fate :
Him only pleasure leads, and peace
attends,
Him, only him, the shield of Jove de-
fends,
Whose means are fair and spotless as
his ends. 1816.

XXXIII

THE PASS OF KIRKSTONE

I

WITHIN the mind strong fancies work,
A deep delight the bosom thrills,
Oft as I pass along the fork
Of these fraternal hills :
Where, save the rugged road, we find
No appanage of human kind,
Nor hint of man ; if stone or rock
Seem not his handy-work to mock
By something cognizably shaped ;
Mockery—or model roughly hewn,
And left as if by earthquake strewn,
Or from the Flood escaped :
Altars for Druid service fit ;
(But where no fire was ever lit,
Unless the glow-worm to the skies
Thence offer nightly sacrifice)
Wrinkled Egyptian monument ;
Green moss-grown tower ; or hoary tent ;
Tents of a camp that never shall be
razed—
On which four thousand years have
gazed !

II

Ye plough-shares sparkling on the
slopes !
Ye snow-white lambs that trip
Imprisoned 'mid the formal props
Of restless ownership !
Ye trees, that may to-morrow fall
To feed the insatiate Prodigal !
Lawns, houses, chattels, groves, and
fields,
All that the fertile valley shields :
Wages of folly—baits of crime,
Of life's uneasy game the stake.
Playthings that keep the eyes awake
Of drowsy, dotard Time ;—
O care ! O guilt !—O vales and plains,
Here, 'mid his own unsexed domains,
A Genius dwells, that can subdue
At once all memory of You.—
Most potent when mists veil the sky,
Mists that distort and magnify :
While the coarse rushes, to the sweeping
breeze,
Sigh forth their ancient melodies !

III

List to those shrill notes—*that* March
Perchance was on the blast,
When, through this Height's inverted
arch,
Rome's earliest legion passed !
—They saw, adventurously impelled,
And older eyes than theirs beheld,
This block—and yon, whose church-like
frame
Gives to this savage Pass its name.
Aspiring Road ! that lov'st to hide
Thy daring in a vapoury bourn,
Not seldom may the hour return
When thou shalt be my guide :
And I (as all men may find cause,
When life is at a weary pause,
And they have panted up the hill
Of duty with reluctant will)
Be thankful, even though tired and faint,
For the rich bounties of constraint ;
Whence oft invigorating transports flow
That choice lacked courage to bestow !

IV

My Soul was grateful for delight
That wore a threatening brow ;
A veil is lifted—can she slight
The scene that opens now ?
Though habitation none appear,
The greenness tells, man must be there ;
The shelter—that the perspective
Is of the clime in which we live ;
Where Toil pursues his daily round ;
Where Pity sheds sweet tears—and
Love,
In woodbine bower or birchen grove,
Inflicts his tender wound.

—Who comes not hither ne'er shall know
How beautiful the world below ;
Nor can he guess how lightly leaps
The brook adown the rocky steep.
Farewell, thou desolate Domain !
Hope, pointing to the cultured plain,
Carols like a shepherd-boy ;
And who is she ?—Can that be Joy !
Who, with a sunbeam for her guide,
Smoothly skims the meadows wide ;
While Faith, from yonder opening cloud,
To hill and vale proclaims aloud,
" Whate'er the weak may dread, the
wicked dare,
Thy lot, O Man, is good, thy portion
fair ! "

1817.

XXXIV

TO ENTERPRISE

KEEP for the Young the unpassioned
smile
Shed from thy countenance, as I see
thee stand
High on that chalky cliff of Briton's
Isle,
A slender volume grasping in thy hand—
(Perchance the pages that relate
The various turns of Crusoe's fate)—
Ah, spare the exulting smile,
And drop thy pointing finger bright
As the first flash of beacon light ;
But neither veil thy head in shadows
dim.
Nor turn thy face away
From One who, in the evening of his day,
To thee would offer no presumptuous
hymn !

I

Bold Spirit ! who art free to rove
Among the starry courts of Jove,
And oft in splendour dost appear
Embodied to poetic eyes,
While traversing this nether sphere,
Where Mortals call thee ENTERPRISE.
Daughter of Hope ! her favourite C. ~~was~~
Whom she to young Ambition bore,
When hunter's arrow first defiled
The grove, and stained the turf with
gore ;
Thee winged Fancy took, and nursed
On broad Euphrates' palmy shore,
And where the nightingale Waters burst
From caves of Indian mountains hoar !
She wrapped thee in a panther's skin ;
And Thou, thy favourite food to win,
The flame-eyed eagle oft wouldst scare
From her rock-fortress in mid air,
With infant shout ; and often sweep,
Paired with the ostrich, o'er the plain ;
Or, tired with sport, wouldst sink
asleep

Upon the couchant lion's mane !
With rolling years thy strength in-
creased ;

And, far beyond, thy native East,
To thee, by varying titles known
As variously thy power was shown,
Did incense-bearing altars rise,
Which caught the blaze of sacrifice,
From suppliants panting for the skies !

II

What though this ancient Earth be trod
No more by step of Demi-god
Mounting from glorious deed to deed
As thou from clime to clime didst lead ;
Yet still, the bosom beating high,
And the hushed farewell of an eye
Where no procrastinating gaze
A last infirmity betrays,

Prove that thy heaven-descended sway
Shall ne'er submit to cold decay.
By thy divinity impelled,
The Stripling seeks the tented field :

The aspiring Virgin kneels ; and, pale
With awe, receives the hallowed veil,
A soft and tender Heroine
Vowed to severer discipline :

Inflamed by thee, the blooming Boy
Makes of the whistling shrouds a toy,
And of the ocean's dismal breast
A play-ground,—or a couch of rest :

'Mid the blank world of snow and ice,
Thou to his dangers dost enchain
The Chamois-chaser awed in vain
By chasm or dizzy precipice ;

And hast Thou not with triumph seen
How soaring Mortals glide between
Or through the clouds, and brave the
light

With bolder than Icarian flight ?
How they, in bells of crystal, dive—
Where winds and waters cease to strife—
For no unholy visitings,

Among the monsters of the Deep ;
And all the sad and precious things
Which there in ghastly silence sleep ?

—Adverse tides and currents headed,
And breathless calms no longer dreaded,
In never-slackening voyage go
Straight as an arrow from the bow ;

And, slighting sails and scornful oars,
Keep faith with Time on distant shores ?
—Within our fearless reach are placed
The secrets of the burning Waste :

Egyptian tombs unlock their dead,
Nile trembles at his fountain head ;
Thou speak'st—and lo ! the polar Seas
Unbosom their last mysteries.

—But oh ! what transports, what
sublime reward,
Won from the world of mind, dost thou
prepare [Bard

For philosophic Sage ; or high-souled

Who, for thy service trained in lonely
woods,

Hath led on pageants floating through
the air,

Or calentured in depth of limpid floods .
Nor grieves—tho' doomed thro' silent
night to bear

The domination of his glorious thenes,
Or struggle in the net-work of thy
dreams !

III

If there be movements in the Patriot's
soul,

From source still deeper, and of higher
worth,

'Tis thine the quickening impulse to
control,

Ar-l in due season send the mandate
forth ;

Thy call a prostrate Nation can restore,
When but a single Mind resolves to
crouch no more.

IV

Dread Minister of wrath !
Who to their destined punishment dost
urge

The Pharaohs of the earth, the men
of hardened heart !

Not unassisted by the flattering stars,
Thou strow'st temptation o'er the path
When they in pomp depart
With trampling horses and refulgent
cars—

Soon to be swallowed by the briny
surge ;

Or cast, for lingering death, on unknown
strands ;

Or caught amid a whirl of desert sands—
An Army now, and now a living hill
That a brief while heaves with convulsive
throes—

Then all is still :
Or, to forget their madness and their
woes,

Wrapt in a winding-sheet of spotless
snows !

V

Back flows the willing current of my
Song :

If to provoke such doom the Impious
dare,

Why should it daunt a blameless prayer ?
—Bold Goddess ! range our Youth
among ;

Nor let thy genuine impulse fail to beat
In hearts no longer young ;

Still may a veteran Few have pride
In thoughts whose sternness makes them
sweet ;

In fixed resolves by Reason justified ;

That to their object cleave like sleet
Whitening a pine tree's northern side,
When fields are naked far and wide,
And withered leaves, from earth's cold
breast
Up-caught in whirlwinds, nowhere can
find rest.

VI

But, if such homage thou disdain
As doth with mellowing years agree,
One rarely absent from thy train
More humble favours may obtain
For thy contented votary.
She, who incites the frolic lambs
In presence of their heedless dams,
And to the solitary fawn
Vouchsafes her lessons, bounteous

Nymph

That wakes the breeze, the sparkling
lymph
Doth hurry to the lawn;
She, who inspires that strain of joyance
holy

Which the sweet Bird, misnamed the
melancholy

Pours forth in shady groves, shall plead
for me;

And vernal mornings opening bright
With views of undefined delight,
And cheerful songs, and suns that shine
On busy days, with thankful nights,
be mine.

VII

But thou, O Goddess! in thy favourite
Isle

(Freedom's impregnable redoubt,
The wide earth's store-house fenced about
With breakers roaring to the gales
That stretch a thousand thousand sails)
Quicken the slothful, and exalt the vile!—
Thy impulse is the life of Fame;
Glad Hope would almost cease to be
If torn from thy society;
And Love, when worthiest of his name,
Is proud to walk the earth with Thee!

XXXV

TO —,

ON HER FIRST ASCENT TO THE SUMMIT
OF HELVELLYN

INMATE of a mountain-dwelling,
Thou hast clomb aloft, and gazed
From the watch-towers of Helvellyn;
Awed, delighted, and amazed!

Potent was the spell that bound thee
Not unwilling to obey;
For blue Ether's arms, flung round thee,
Stilled the pantings of dismay.

Lo! the dwindled woods and meadows;
What a vast abyss is there!

W. P.

Lo! the clouds, the solemn shadows,
And the glistenings—heavenly fair!

And a record of commotion
Which a thousand ridges yield;
Ridge, and gulf, and distant ocean
Gleaming like a silver shield!

Maiden! now take flight;—inherit
Alps or Andes—they are thine!
With the morning's roseate Spirit,
Sweep their length of snowy line;

Or survey their bright dominions
In the gorgeous colours drest
Flung from off the purple pinions,
Evening spreads throughout the west!

Thine are all the coral fountains
Warbling in each starry vault
Of the untrodden lunar mountains;
Listen to their songs!—or halt,

To Niphates' top invited.

Whither spiteful Satan steered;
Or descend where the ark alighted,
When the green earth re-appeared;

For the power of hills is on thee.
As was witnessed through thine eye
Then, when old Helvellyn won thee
To confess their majesty.

1816.

XXXVI

TO A YOUNG LADY,

WHO HAD BEEN REPROACHED FOR TAKING
LONG WALKS IN THE COUNTRY

DEAR Child of Nature, let them rail!

—There is a nest in a green dale,
A harbour and a hold;
Where thou, a Wife and Friend, shalt see
Thy own heart-stirring days, and be
A light to young and old.

There, healthy as a shepherd boy,
And treading among flowers of joy
Which at no season fade,
Thou, while thy babes around thee cling,
Shalt show us how divine a thing
A Woman may be made.

Thy thoughts and feelings shall not die,
Nor leave thee, when grey hairs are nigh,
A melancholy slave;
But an old age serene and bright,
And lovely as a Lapland night,
Shall lead thee to thy grave.

1803.

XXXVII

WATER-FOWL

"Let me be allowed the aid of verse to describe the evolutions which these visitants sometimes perform, on a fine day towards the close of winter."—*Extract from the Author's Book on the Lakes.*

MARK how the feathered tenants of
the flood,

With grace of motion that might scarcely seem
 Inferior to angelical, prolong
 Their curious pastime! shaping in mid air
 (And sometimes with ambitious wing that soars
 High as the level of the mountain-tops)
 A circuit ampler than the lake beneath—
 Their own domain; but ever, while intent
 On tracing and retracing that large round,
 Their jubilant activity evolves
 Hundreds of curves and circlets, to and fro.
 Upward and downward, progress intricate
 Yet unperplexed, as if one spirit swayed
 Their indefatigable flight. 'Tis done—
 Ten times, or more, I fancied it had ceased;
 But lo! the vanished company again
 Ascending; they approach—I hear their wings,
 Faint, faint at first; and then an eager sound,
 Past in a moment—and as faint again!
 They tempt the sun to sport amid their plumes;
 They tempt the water, or the gleaming ice,
 To show them a fair image: 'tis themselves,
 Their own fair forms, upon the glimmering plain,
 Painted more soft and fair as they descend
 Almost to touch;—then up again aloft,
 Up with a sally and a flash of speed,
 As if they scorned both resting-place and rest!

1812.

XXXVIII

VIEW FROM THE TOP OF BLACK COMB.

THIS Height a ministering Angel might select:
 For from the summit of BLACK COMB
 (dread name
 Derived from clouds and storms!) the amplest range
 Of unobstructed prospect may be seen
 That British ground commands:—low dusky tracts.
 Where Trent is nursed, far southward!
 Cambrian hills

¹ Black Comb stands at the southern extremity of Cumberland: its base covers a much greater extent of ground than any other mountain in those parts; and, from its situation, the summit commands a more extensive view than any other point in Britain.

To the south-west, a multitudinous show;
 And, in a line of eye-sight linked with these,
 The hoary peaks of Scotland that give birth
 To Tiviot's stream, to Annan, Tweed, and Clyde:—
 Crowding the quarter whence the sun comes forth
 Gigantic mountains rough with crags; beneath,
 Right at the imperial station's western base
 Main ocean, breaking audibly, and stretched
 Far into silent regions blue and pale;—
 And visibly engirding Mona's Isle
 That, as we left the plain, before our sight
 Stood like a lofty mount, uplifting slowly
 (Above the convex of the watery globe)
 Into clear view the cultured fields that streak
 Her habitable shores, but now appears
 A dwindled object, and submits to lie
 At the spectator's feet.—You azure ridge,
 Is it a perishable cloud? Or there
 Do we behold the line of Erin's coast?
 Land sometimes by the roving shepherd-swain
 (Like the bright confines of another world)
 Not doubtfully perceived.—Look homeward now!
 In depth, in height, in circuit, how serene
 The spectacle, how pure!—Of Nature's works,
 In earth, and air, and earth-embracing sea,
 A revelation infinite it seems;
 Display august of man's inheritance,
 Of Britain's calm felicity and power!

1813.

XXXIX

THE HAUNTED TREE

TO —

THOSE silver clouds collected round
 the sun
 His mid-day warmth abate not, seeming less
 To overshadow than multiply his beams
 By soft reflection—grateful to the sky,
 To rocks, fields, woods. Nor doth our human sense
 Ask, for its pleasure, screen or canopy
 More ample than the time-dismantled Oak
 Spreads o'er this tuft of heath, which
 now, attired

In the whole fulness of its bloom, affords
Couch beautiful as e'er for earthly use
Was fashioned; whether by the hand
Of Art

That eastern Sultan, amid flowers
enwrought

On silken tissue, might diffuse his limbs
In languor; or, by Nature, for repose
Of panting Wood-nymph, wearied with
the chase.

O Lady! fairer in thy Poet's sight
Than fairest spiritual creature of the
groves

Approach;—and, thus invited, crown
with rest

The noon-tide hour: though truly some
there are

Whose footsteps superstitiously avoid
This venerable Tree; for, when the
wind

Blows keenly, it sends forth a creaking
(Alas! the general roar of woods and
crag)

Distinctly heard from far—a doleful note!
As if (so Grecian shepherds would have
deemed)

The Hamadryad, pent within, bewailed
Some bitter wrong. Nor is it unbel-
lieved,

By ruder fancy, that a troubled ghost
Haunts the old trunk; lamenting deeds
of which

The flowery ground is conscious. But
no wind

Sweeps now along this elevated ridge;
Not even a zephyr stirs;—the obnoxious
Tree

Is mute; and, in his silence, would look
down,

O lovely Wanderer of the trackless hills.
On thy reclining form with more delight
Than his ovals in the sheltered vale
Seem to participate, the while they view
Their own far-stretching arms and
leafy heads

Vividly pictured in some glassy pool,
That, for a brief space, checks the
hurrying stream!

1819.

XL

THE TRIAD

Show me the noblest Youth of present
time.

Whose trembling fancy would to love
give birth;

Some God or Hero, from the Olympian
clime

Returned, to seek a Consort upon earth;
Or, in no doubtful prospect, let me see

The brightest star of ages yet to be,
And I will match and match him bliss-
fully.

I will not fetch a Naiad from a flood
Pure as herself—(song lacks not mightier
power)

Nor leaf-crowned Dryad from a pathless
wood,

Nor Sea-nymph glistening from her
coral bower;

Mere Mortals bodied forth in vision still,
Shall with Mount Ida's triple lustre fill
The chaster coverts of a British hill.

"Appear!—obey my lyre's command!
Come, like the Graces, hand in hand!

For ye, though not by birth allied,
Are Sisters in the bond of love;

Nor shall the tongue of envious pride
Presume those interweavings to reprove

In you, which that fair progeny of Jove,
Learned from the tuneful spheres that
glide

In endless union, earth and sea above."
—I sing in vain;—the pines have hushed
their waving;

A peerless Youth expectant at my side,
Breathless as they, with unabated
craving

Looks to the earth, and to the vacant
air,

And, with a wandering eye that seems
to chide,

Asks of the clouds what occupants they
hide;—

But why solicit more than sight could
bear,

By casting on a moment all we dare?
Invoke we those bright Beings one by
one;

And what was boldly promised, truly
shall be done.

"Fear not a constraining measure!
—Yielding to this gentle spell,

Lucida! from domes of pleasure,
Or from cottage-sprinkled dell,

Come to regions solitary,
Where the eagle builds her airy,¹

Above the hermit's long-forsaken cell!"
—She comes!—behold

That Figure, like a ship with snow-white
sail!

Nearer she draws; a breeze uplifts
her veil;

Upon her coming wait
As pure a sunshine and as soft a gale

As e'er, on herbage covering earthly
mold.

Tempted the bird of Juno to unfold
His richest splendour—when his veering
gait

And every motion of his starry train
Seem governed by a strain

Of music, audible to him alone.

"Aerie" is right spelling; "eyrie" Shakes-
pearian.

"O Lady, worthy of earth's proudest throne!
 Nor less, by excellence of nature, fit
 Beside an ambitious hearth to sit
 Domestic queen, where grandeur is
 unknown;
 What living man could fear
 The worst of Fortune's malice, wert
 Thou near,
 Humbling that lily-stem, thy sceptre
 meek,
 That its fair flowers may from his cheek
 Brush the too happy tear?
 —Queen, and handmaid lowly!
 Whose skill can speed the day with
 lively cares,
 And banish melancholy [pares:
 By all that mind invents or hand pre-
 O Thou, against whose lip, without
 its smile
 And in its silence even, no heart is proof:
 Whose goodness, sinking deep, would
 reconcile
 The softest Nursling of a gorgeous palace
 To the bare life beneath the hawthorn-
 roof
 Of Sherwood's Archer, or in caves of
 Wallace—
 Who that hath seen thy beauty could
 content
 His soul with but a *glimpse* of heavenly
 day?
 Who that hath loved thee, but would lay
 His strong hand on the wind, if it
 were bent
 To take thee in thy majesty away?
 —Pass onward (even the glancing deer
 Till we depart intrude not here:)
 That mossy slope, o'er which the
 woodbine throws
 A canopy, is smoothed for thy repose!"

Glad moment is it when the throng
 Of warblers in full concert strong
 Strive, and not vainly strive, to rout
 The lagging shower, and force coy
 Phoebus out,
 Met by the rainbow's form divine,
 Issuing from her cloudy shrine:—
 So may the thrillings of the lyre
 Prevail to further our desire,
 While to these shades a sister Nymph I
 call.

"Come, if the notes thine ear may
 pierce,
 Come, youngest of the lovely Three,
 Submissive to the might of verse
 And the dear voice of harmony,
 By none more deeply felt than Thee!"
 —I sang; and lo! from pastimes
 virginal
 She hastens to the tents
 Of nature, and the lonely elements,

Air sparkles round her with a dazzling
 sheen;
 But mark her glowing cheek, her vesture
 green!
 And, as if wishful to disarm
 Or to repay the potent Charm,
 She bears the string'd lute of old
 romance,
 That cheered the trellised arbour's
 privacy.
 And soothed war-wearied knights in
 rafterd hall.
 How vivid, yet how delicate, her glee!
 So tripped the Muse, inventress of the
 dance:
 So, truant in waste woods, the blithe
 Euphrosyne!

But the ringlets of that head
 Why are they ungarlanded?
 Why bedeck her temples less
 Than the simplest shepherdess?
 Is it not a brow, inviting
 Choicest flowers that ever breathed,
 Which the myrtle would delight in
 Withe Idalian rose enwreathed?
 But her humilité, is well content
 With one wild floweret (call it not forlorn)
 FLOWER OF THE WINDS, beneath her
 bosom worn—
 Yet more for love than ornament.

Open, ye thickets! let her fly,
 Swift as a Thracian Nymph o'er field
 and height!
 For She, to all but those who love her,
 shy,
 Would gladly vanish from a Stranger's
 sight;
 Though where she is beloved and loves,
 Light as the wheeling butterfly she
 moves;
 Her happy spirit as a bird is free,
 That rifles blossoms on a tree,
 Turning them inside out with arch
 audacity.

Alas! how little can a moment show
 Of an eye where feeling plays
 In ten thousand dewy rays;
 A face o'er which a thousand shadows
 go!
 —She stops—is fastened to that rivulet's
 side;
 And there (while, with sedate mien,
 O'er timid waters that have scarcely left
 Their birth-place in the rocky cleft
 She becks) at leisure may be seen
 Features to old ideal grace allied,
 Amid their smiles and dimples dignified—
 Fit countenance for the soul of primal
 truth;

The bland composure of eternal youth!
 What more changeful than the sea?
 But over his great tides

Fidelity presides ;
 And this light-hearted Maiden con-
 stant is as he.
 High is her aim as heaven above,
 And wide as ether her good-will ;
 And, like the lowly reed, her love
 Can drink its nurture from the scantiest
 rill :
 Knight as keen as frosty star
 Is to her charity no bar,
 Nor interrupts her frolic graces
 When she is, far from these wild places.
 Encircled by familiar faces.

O the charm that manuers draw,
 Nature, from thy genuine law !
 If from what her hand would do,
 Her voice would utter, aught ensue
 Untoward or unfit ;
 She, in benign affections pure,
 In self-forgetfulness secure.
 Sheds round the transient harm or
 • vague mischance
 A light unknown to tutored elegance :
 Her's is not a cheek shame-stricken,
 But her blushes are joy-flushes ;
 And the fault (if fault it be)
 Only ministers to quicken
 Laughter-loving gaiety,
 And kindle sportive wit—
 Leaving this Daughter of the mountains
 free.

As if she knew that Oberon king of Faery
 Had crossed her purpose with some
 quaint vagary,
 And heard his viewless hands
 Over their nirthful triumph clapping
 hands.

"Last of the Three, though eldest born,
 Reveal thyself, like pensive Morn
 Touched by the skylark's earliest notes,
 Ere humbler gladness be afloat.
 But whether in the semblance drest
 Of Dawn—or Eve, fair vision of the
 west,

Come with each anxious hope subdued
 By woman's gentle fortune,
 Each grief, through meekness, settling
 into rest.

—Or I would hail thee when some high-
 wrought page
 Of a closed volume lingering in thy hand
 Has raised thy spirit to a peaceful stand
 Among the glories of a happier age."

Her brow hath opened on me—see,
 it there,

Brightening the umbrage of her hair ;
 So gleams the crescent moon, that loves
 To be deserted through shady groves.
 Tenderest bloom is on her cheek ;
 Wish not for a richer streak ;
 Nor dread the depth of meditative
 eye ;

But let thy love, upon that azure field
 Of thoughtfulness and beauty, yield
 Its homage offered up in purity.
 What would'st thou more ? In sunny
 glade,

Or under leaves of thickest shade,
 Was such a stillness e'er diffused
 Since earth grew calm while angels
 mused ?

Softly she treads, as if her foot were
 loth

To crush the mountain dew-drops—
 soon to melt

On the flower's breast ; as if she felt
 That flowers themselves, what'er their
 hue,

With all their fragrance, all their glisten-
 ing,

Call to the heart for inward listening—
 And though for bridal wreaths and
 tokens true

Welcomed wisely ; though a growth
 Which the careless shepherd sleeps on,
 As fitly spring from turf the mourner
 weeps on—

And without wrong are cropped the
 marble tomb to strew.

The Charm is over ; the mute Phantoms
 gone.

Nor will return—but droop not, favoured
 Youth ;

The apparition that before thee shone
 Obeyed a summons covetous of truth.
 From these wild rocks thy footsteps I
 will guide

To bowers in which thy fortune may be
 tried,

And one of the bright Three become thy
 happy Bride.

1828.

XLI

THE WISHING-GATE

In the vale of Grasmere, by the side of the old
 high-way leading to Ambleside, is a gate,
 which, time out of mind, has been called the
 Wishing-gate, from a belief that wishes formed
 or indulged there have a favourable issue.

HOPE rules a land for ever green :
 All powers that serve the bright-eyed
 Queen

Are confident and gay ;
 Clouds at her bidding disappear ;
 Points she to aught ?—the bliss draws
 near,

And Fancy smooths the way.

Not such the land of Wishes—there
 Dwell fruitless day-dreams, lawless
 prayer,

And thoughts with things at strife ;
 Yet how forlorn, should ye depart
 Ye superstitions of the heart,
 How poor, were human life !

When magic lore abjured its might,
 Ye did not forfeit one dear right.
 One tender claim abate ;
 Witness this symbol of your sway,
 Surviving near the public way,
 The rustic Wishing-gate !

Inquire not if the faery race
 Shed kindly influence on the place,
 Ere northward they retired ;
 If here a warrior left a spell,
 Panting for glory as he fell ;
 Or here a saint expired.

Enough that all around is fair,
 Composed with Nature's finest care,
 And in her fondest love—
 Peace to embosom and content—
 To overawe the turbulent,
 The selfish to reprove.

Yea ! even the Stranger from afar,
 Reclining on this moss-grown bar,
 Unknowing, and unknown,
 The infection of the ground partakes,
 Longing for his Belov'd—who make,
 All happiness her own.

Then why should conscious spirits fear
 The mystic stirrings that are here,
 The ancient faith disclaim ?
 The local Genius ne'er befriends
 Desires whose course in folly ends,
 Whose just reward is shame.

Smile if thou wilt, but not in scorn,
 If some, by ceaseless pains outworn,
 Here crave an easier lot ;
 If some have thirsted to renew
 A broken vow, or bind a true,
 With firmer, holier knot.

And not in vain, when thoughts are cast
 Upon the irrevocable past,
 Some Penitent sincere
 May for a worthier future sigh,
 While trickles from his downcast eye
 No unavailing tear.

The Worldling, pining to be freed
 From turmoil, who would turn or speed
 The current of his fate,
 Might stop before this favoured scene,
 At Nature's call, nor blush to lean
 Upon the Wishing-gate.

The Sage, who feels how blind, how weak
 Is man, though loth such help to seek,
 Yet, passing, here might pause,
 And thirst for insight to allay
 Misgiving, while the crimson day
 In quietness withdraws ;

Or when the church-clock's knell pro-
 found
 To Time's first step across the bound
 Of midnight makes reply ;

Time pressing on with starry crest,
 To filial sleep upon the breast
 Of dread eternity.

1828.

XLII

THE WISHING-GATE DESTROYED

'Tis gone—with old belief and dream
 That round it clung, and tempting
 scheme
 Released from fear and doubt ;
 And the bright landscape too must lie,
 By this blank wall, from every eye
 Relentlessly shut out.

Bear witness ye who seldom passed
 That opening—but a look ye cast
 Upon the lake below,
 What spirit-stirring power it gained
 From faith which here was entertained,
 Though reason might say no.

Blest is that ground, where, o'er the
 springs
 Of history, Glory clasps her wings,
 Fame sheds the exalting tear ;
 Yet earth is wide, and many a nook
 Unheard of is, like this, a book
 For modest meanings dear.

It was in sooth a happy thought
 That grafted, on so fair a spot,
 So confident a token
 Of coming good ;—the charm is fled ;
 Indulgent centuries spun a thread,
 Which one harsh day has broken.

Alas ! for him who gave the word ;
 Could he no sympathy afford,
 Derived from earth or heaven,
 To hearts so oft by hope betrayed ;
 Their very wishes wanted aid
 Which here was freely given ?

Where, for the love-lorn maiden's
 wound,
 Will now so readily be found
 A balm of expectation ?
 Anxious for far-off children, where
 Shall mothers breathe a like sweet air
 Of home-felt consolation ?

And not unfelt will prove the loss
 'Mid trivial care and petty cross
 And each day's shallow grief ;
 Though the most easily beguiled
 Were oft among the first that smiled
 At their own fond belief.

If still the reckless change we mourn,
 A reconciling thought may turn
 To harm that might lurk there.
 Fre judgment prompted from within
 Fit aims, with courage to begin,
 And strength to persevere.

Not Fortune's slave is Man : our state
Enjoins, while firm resolves await
On wishes just and wise,
That strenuous action follow both,
And life be one perpetual growth*
Of heaven-ward enterprise.

So taught, so trained, we boldly face
All accidents of time and place ;
Whatever props may fail,
Trust in that sovereign law can spread
New glory o'er the mountain's head,
Fresh beauty through the vale.

That truth informing mind and heart,
The simplest cottager may part,
Ungrieved, with charm and spell ;
And yet, lost Wishing-gate, to thee
The voice of grateful memory
Shall bid a kind farewell !

See Note at the end of the Volume.

XLIII

THE PRIMROSE OF THE ROCK
A Rock there is whose homely front
The passing traveller slights ;
Yet there the glow-worms hang their
lamps,
Like stars, at various heights ;
And one coy Primrose to that Rock
The vernal breeze invites.

What hideous warfare hath been waged.
What kingdoms overthrown,
Since first I spied that Primrose-tuft
And marked it for my own ;
A lasting link in Nature's chain
From highest heaven let down !

The flowers, still faithful to the stems,
Their fellowship renew ;
The stems are faithful to the root,
That worketh out of view ;
And to the rock the root adheres
In every fibre true.

Close clings to earth the living rock,
Though threatening still to fall ;
The earth is constant to her sphere ;
And God upholds them all :
So blooms this lonely Plant, nor dreads
Her annual funeral.

Here closed the meditative strain ;
But air breathed soft that day,
The hoary mountain-heights were
cheered.

The sunny vale looked gay ;
And to the Primrose of the Rock
I gave this after-lay.

I sang—Let myriads of bright flowers,
Like Thee, in field and grove
Revive unenvied ;—mightier far,
Than tremblings that reprove
Our vernal tendencies to hope,
Is God's redeeming love ;

That love which changed—for woe
disease,
For sorrow that had bent
O'er hopeless dust, for withered age—
Their mortal element,
And turned the thistles of a curse
To types beneficent.

Sin-blighted though we are, we too,
The reasoning Sons of Men,
From one oblivious winter called
Shall rise, and breathe again ;
And in eternal summer lose
Our threescore years and ten.
To humbleness of heart descends
This presence from on high,
The faith that elevates the just,
Before and when they die ;
And makes each soul a separate heaven,
A court for Deity.

1831.

XLIV

PRESENTIMENTS

PRESENTIMENTS ! they judge not right
Who deem that ye from open light
Retire in fear of shame ;
All heaven-born Instincts shun the touch
Of vulgar sense,—and, being such,
Such privilege ye claim.

The tear whose source I could not guess,
The deep sigh that secured fatherless,
Were mine in early days ;
And now, unforced by time to part
With fancy, I obey my heart,
And venture on your praise.

What though some busy foes to good,
Too potent over nerve and blood,
Lurk near you—and combine
To taint the health which ye infuse ;
This hides not from the moral Muse
Your origin divine.

How oft from you, derided Powers !
Comes Faith that in auspicious hours
Builds castles, not of air ;
Bodings unsanctioned by the wili
Flow from your visionary skill,
And teach us to beware.

The bosom-weight, your stubborn gift,
That no philosophy can lift,
Shall vanish, if ye please,
Like morning mist : and, where it lay,
The spirit at your bidding play
In gaiety and ease.

Star-guided contemplations move
Through space, though calm, not
raised above
Prognostics that ye rule ;
The naked Indian of the wild,
And haply, too, the cradled Child,
Are pupils of your school.

But who can fathom your intents,
 Number their signs or instruments?
 A rainbow, a sunbeam,
 A subtle smell that Spring unbinds,
 Dead pause abrupt of midnight winds,
 An echo, or a dream.

The laughter of the Christmas hearth
 With sighs of self-exhausted mirth
 Ye feelingly reprove;
 And daily, in the conscious breast,
 Your visitations are a test
 And exercise of love.

When some great change gives boundless
 scope
 To an exulting Nation's hope,
 Oft, startled and made wise
 By your low-breathed interpretations.
 The simply-meek forgetaste the springs
 Of bitter contraries.

Ye daunt the proud array of war,
 Pervade the lonely ocean far
 As sail hath been unfurled;
 For dancers in the festive hall
 What ghostly partners hath your call
 Fetched from the shadowy world.

'Tis said, that warnings ye dispense,
 Emboldened by a keener sense;
 That men have lived for whom
 With dread precision, ye made clear
 The hour that in a distant year
 Should knell them to the tomb.

Unwelcome insight! Yet there are
 Blest times when mystery is laid bare,
 Truth shows a glorious face,
 While on that isthmus which commands
 The councils of both worlds, she stands,
 Sage Spirits! by your grace.

God, who instructs the brutes to scent
 All changes of the element,
 Whose wisdom fixed the scale
 Of natures, for our wants provides
 By higher, sometimes humbler, guides,
 When lights of reason fail.

1830.

XLV VERNAL ODE

*Rerum Natura tota est nusquam magis quam
 in minimis.*—PLIN. NAT. HIST.

BENEATH the concave of an April sky,
 When all the fields with freshest green
 were dight,
 Appeared, in presence of the spiritual eye
 That aids or supersedes our grosser
 sight,
 The form and rich habiliments of One
 Whose countenance bore resemblance
 to the sun,

When it reveals, in evening majesty,
 Feathers half lost amid their own pure
 light.

Poised like a weary cloud, in middle air
 He hung,—then floated with angelic ease
 (Softening that bright effulgence by
 degrees)

Till he had reached a summit sharp and
 bare,

Where oft the venturous heifer drinks
 the noontide breeze.

Upon the apex of that lofty cone
 Alighted, there the Stranger stood alone;
 Fair as a gorgeous fabric of the east
 Suddenly raised by some enchanter's
 power,

Where nothing was; and firm as some
 old Tower

Of Britain's realm, whose leafy crest
 Waves high, embellished by a gleaming
 shower!

II

Beneath the shadow of his purple wings
 Rested a golden harp;—he touched the
 strings;

And, after prelude of unearthly sound
 Poured through the echoing hills around,
 He sang—

No wintry desolations,
 Scorching blight or noxious dew,
 Affect my native habitations;
 Buried in glory, far beyond the scope
 Of man's inquiring gaze, but to his hope
 Imaged, though faintly, in the hue
 Profound of night's ethereal blue;
 And in the aspect of each radiant orb;—
 Some fixed, some wandering with no
 timid curb;

But wandering star and fixed, to mortal
 Blended in absolute serenity,
 And free from semblance of decline;—
 Fresh as if Evening brought their natal
 hour,

Her darkness splendour gave, her
 silence power,
 To testify of Love and Grace divine.

III

What if those bright fires
 Shine subject to decay,
 Sons haply of extinguished sires,
 Themselves to lose their light, or pass
 away

Like clouds before the wind,
 Be thanks poured out to Him whose
 hand bestows,

Nightly, on human kind
 That vision of endurance and repose
 —And though to every draught of
 vital breath
 Renewed throughout the bonds of earth
 or ocean.

The melancholy gates of Death
Respond with sympathetic motion;
Though all that feeds on nether air,
How'er magnificent or fair,
Grows but to perish, and entrust
Its ruins to their kindred dust;
Yet, by the Almighty's ever-during
care,
Her procreant vigils Nature keeps
Amid the unfathomable deeps;
And saves the peopled fields of earth
From dread of emptiness or dearth.
Thus, in their stations, lifting tow'rd the
sky

The foliaged head in cloud-like majesty,
The shadow-casting race of trees survive:
Thus, in the train of Spring, arrive
Sweet flowers;—what living eye hath
viewed

Their myriads?—endlessly renewed,
Where'er strikes the sun's glad ray;
Where'er the subtle waters stray;
Where'er sportive breezes bend
Their course, or genial showers descend!
Mortals, rejoice, the very Angels quit
Their mansions unsusceptible of change,
Amid your pleasant bowers to sit,
And through your sweet vicissitudes to
range!"

IV

O, nursed at happy distance from the
cares [Muse]
Of a too-anxious world, mild pastoral
That, to the sparkling crown Urania
wears,

And to her sister Clio's laurel wreath,
Prefer'st a garland culled from purple
heath, [dews]
Or blooming thicket moist with morning
Was such bright Spectacle vouchsafed
to me?

And was it granted to the simple ear
Of thy contented Votary
Such melody to hear!
Him rather suits it, side by side with
thee,

Wrapped in a fit of pleasing indolence,
While thy tired lute hangs on the
hawthorn-tree,

To lie and listen—till o'er-drows'd sense
Sinks, hardly conscious of the influence—
To the soft murmur of the vagrant Bee.
—A slender sound! yet hoary Time
Doth to the Soul exalt it with the chime,
Of all his years;—a company

Of ages coming, ages gone;
(Nations from before them sweeping,
Regions in destruction steeping.)
But every awful note in unison
With that faint utterance, which tells
Of treasure sucked from buds and bells,
For the pure keeping of those waxen
cells;

Where She—a statist prudent to confer
Upon the common weal; a warrior
bold,

Radiant all over with unburnished gold,
And armed with living spear for mortal
fight;

A cunning forager
That spreads no waste; a social builder;
one

In whom all busy offices unite
With all fine functions that afford
delight—

Safe through the winter storm in quiet
dwells!

And is She brought within the power
Of vision?—o'er this tempting flower
Hovering until the petals stay
Her flight, and take its voice away!—
Observe each wing!—a tiny van!
The structure of her laden thigh,
How fragile! yet of ancestry
Mysteriously remote and high;
High as the imperial front of man;
The roseate bloom on woman's cheek;
The soaring eagle's curved beak;
The white plumes of the floating swan;
Old as the tiger's paw, the lion's mane
Ere shaken by that mood of stern disdain
At which the desert trembles.—Humming
Bee!

Thy sting was needless then, perchance
unknown,

The seeds of malice were not sown;
All creatures met in peace, from fierce-
ness free.

And no pride blended with their dignity.
—Tears had not broken from their
source;

Nor Anguish strayed from her Tartarean
den;

The golden years maintained a course
Not undiversified though smooth and
even;

We were not mocked with glimpse and
shadow then,

Bright Seraphs mixed familiarly with
men;

And earth and stars composed a universal
heaven! 1817.

XLVI

DEVOTIONAL INCITEMENTS

"Not to the earth confined,
Ascend to heaven."

WHERE will they stop, those breathing
Powers,

The Spirits of the new-born flowers?
They wander with the breeze, the wind
Where'er the streams a passage find;
Up from their native ground they rise
In mute aerial harmonies;

From humble violet—modest thyme—
Exhaled, the essential odours climb,
As if no space below the sky
Their subtle flight could satisfy :
Heaven will not tax our thoughts with
pride

If like ambition be *their* guide.

Roused by this kindest of May-
showers,

The spirit-quickener of the flowers,
That with moist virtue softly cleaves
The huds, and freshens the young leaves,
The birds pour forth their souls in notes
Of rapture from a thousand throats—
Here checked by too impetuous haste,
While there the music runs to waste,
With bounty more and more enlarged,
Till the whole air is overcharged ;
Give ear, O Man ! to their appeal
And thirst for no inferior zeal.
Thou, who canst *think*, as well as feel.

Mount from the earth ; aspire !
aspire !

So pleads the town's cathedral quire.
In strains that from their solemn height
Sink, to attain a loftier flight ;
While incense from the altar breathes
Rich fragrance in embodied wreaths ;
Or, flung, from swinging censers, shrouds
The taper-lights, and curls in clouds
Around angelic Forms, the still
Creation of the painter's skill,
That on the service wait concealed
One moment, and the next revealed
—Cast off your bonds, awake, arise,
And for no transient ecstasies !
What else can mean the visual plea
Of still or moving imagery—
The iterated summons loud,
Not wasted on the attendant crowd,
Nor wholly lost upon the throng
Hurrying the busy streets along ?

Alas ! the sanctities combined
By art to unsensualise the mind.
Decay, and languish ; or, as creeds
and humours change, are spurned like
weeds :

The priests are from their altars thrust ;
Temples are levelled with the dust ;
And solemn rites and awful forms
Founder amid fanatic storms.
Yet evermore, through years renewed
In undisturbed vicissitude
Of seasons balancing their flight
On the swift wings of day and night,
Kind Nature keeps a heavenly door
Wide open for the scattered Poor.
Where flower-breathed incense to the
skies

Is wafted in mute harmonies :
And ground fresh-cloven by the plough
Is fragrant with a humbler vow :

Where birds, and brooks from leafy dells
Chime forth unwearied canticles,
And vapours magnify and spread
The glory of the sun's bright head—
Still constant in her worship, still
Conforming to the eternal Will,
Whether men sow or reap the fields,
Divine monition Nature yields,
That not by bread alone we live,
Or what a hand of flesh can give ;
That every day should leave some part
Free for a sabbath of the heart :
So shall the seventh be truly blest,
From morn to eve, with hallowed rest.

1832.

XLVII

THE CUCKOO-CLOCK

Wouldst thou be taught, when sleep
has taken flight,
By a sure voice that can most sweetly
tell,
How far-off yet a glimpse of morning
light,
And if to lure the truant back be well,
Forbear to counter a Repeater's stroke,
That, answering to thy touch, will
sound the hour ;
Better provide thee with a Cuckoo-Clock
For service hung behind thy chamber-
door ;
And in due time the soft spontaneous
shock,
The double note, as if with living power,
Will to composure lead—or make thee
blithe as bird in bower.

List, Cuckoo—Cuckoo !—oft tho' tem-
pests howl,
Or nipping frost remind thee trees are
bare,
How cattle pine, and droop the shiver-
ing fowl,

Thy spirits will seem to feed on balmy
air :

I speak with knowledge,—by that
Voice beguiled,

Thou wilt salute old memories as they
throng [wild

Into thy heart ; and fancies, running
Through fresh green fields, and budding
groves among,

Will make thee happy, happy as a child ;
O sunshine wilt thou think, and flowers,
and song,

And breathe as in a world where nothing
can go wrong.

And know—that, even for him who
shuns the day

And nightly tosses on a bed of pain ;
Whose joys, from all but memory swept
away, [again :

Must come un hoped for, if they come

Know—that, for him whose waking
thoughts, severe
As his distress is sharp, would scorn
my theme,
The mimic notes, striking upon his ear
In sleep, and intermingling with his
dream,
Could from sad regions send him to a
dear
Delightful land of verdure, shower and
gleam,
To mock the *wandering* Voice beside some
haunted stream.

O bounty without measure! while
the grace
Of Heaven doth in such wise, from
humblest springs,
Pour pleasure forth, and solaces that
trace
A mazy course along familiar things,
Well may our hearts have faith that
blessings come,
Streaming from founts above the starry
sky,
With angels when their own untroubled
home
They leave, and speed on nightly embassy
To visit earthly chambers,—and for
whom?
Yea, both for souls who God's forbear-
ance try,
And those that seek his help, and for
his mercy sigh.

XLVIII

TO THE CLOUDS

ARMY of Clouds! ye winged Host in
troops
Ascending from behind the motionless
brow
Of that tall rock, as from a hidden
world,
O whither with such eagerness of speed?
What seek ye, or what shun ye? of the
gale
Companions, fear ye to be left behind,
Or racing o'er your blue ethereal field
Content ye with each other? of the
sea
Children, thus post ye over vale and
height
To sink upon your mother's lap—and
rest?
Or were ye rightlier hailed, when first
mine eyes
Beheld in your impetuous march the
likeness
Of a wide army pressing on to meet
Or overtake some unknown enemy?—
But your smooth motions suit a peace-
ful aim;

And Fancy, not less aptly pleased,
compares
Your squadrons to an endless flight of
birds
Aerial, upon due migration bound
To mulder climes; or rather do ye
urge
In caravan your hasty pilgrimage
To pause at last on more aspiring heights
Than these, and utter your devotion
there
With thunderous voice? Or are ye
jubilant,
And would ye, tracking your proud
lord the Sun,
Be present at his setting; or the pomp
Of Persian mornings would ye fill, and
stand
Poising your splendours high above
the heads
Of worshippers kneeling to their up-
risen God?
Whence, whence, ye Clouds! this
eagerness of speed?
Speak, silent creatures.—They are gone,
are fled,
Buried together in yon gloomy mass
That loads the middle heaven; and
clear and bright
And vacant doth the region which they
thronged
Appear; a calm descent of sky conduct-
ing
Down to the unapproachable abyss,
Down to that hidden gulf from which
they rose
To vanish—fleet as days and months and
years,
Fleet as the generations of mankind,
Power, glory, empire, as the world it-
self,
The lingering world, when time hath
ceased to be
But the winds roar, shaking the rooted
trees,
And see! a bright precursor to a train
Perchance as numerous, overpeers the
rock
That sullenly refuses to partake
Of the wild impulse. From a fount of
life
Invisible, the long procession moves
Luminous or gloomy, welcome to the
vale
Which they are entering, welcome to
mine eye
That sees them, to my soul that owns
in them,
And in the bosom of the firmament
O'er which they move, wherein they
are contained,
A type of her capacious self and all
Her restless progeny.

A humble walk
 Here is my body doomed to tread, this path,
 A little hoary line and faintly traced,
 Work, shall we call it, of the shepherd's foot
 Or of his flock?—joint vestige of them both.
 I pace it unrepining, for my thoughts
 Admit no bondage and my words have wings.
 Where is the Orphean lyre, or Druid harp,
 To accompany the verse? The mountain blast
 Shall be our hand of music: he shall sweep
 The rocks, and quivering trees, and billowy lake,
 And search the fibres of the caves, and they
 Shall answer, for our song is of the Clouds
 And the wind loves them; and the gentle gales—
 Which by their aid re-clothe the naked lawn
 With annual verdure, and revive the woods,
 And moisten the parched lips of thirsty flowers—
 Love them; and every idle breeze of air
 Bends to the favourite burthen. Moon and stars
 Keep their most solemn vigils when the Clouds
 Watch also, shifting peaceably their place
 Like hands of ministering Spirits, or when they lie,
 As if some Protean art the change had wrought,
 In listless quiet o'er the ethereal deep
 Scattered, a Cyclades of various shapes
 And all degrees of beauty. O ye Lightnings!
 Ye are their perious offspring; and the Sun—
 Source inexhaustible of life and joy,
 And type of man's far-darting reason, therefore [verse]
 In old time worshipped as the god of
 A blazing intellectual deity—
 Loves his own glory in their looks, and showers
 Upon that unsubstantial brotherhood
 Visions with all but beatific light
 Enriched—too transient were they not renewed
 From age to age, and did not, while we gaze
 In silent rapture, credulous desire
 Nourish the hope that memory lacks not power [thought]
 To keep the treasure unimpaired, Vain

Yet why repine, created as we are
 For joy and rest, albeit to find them only
 Lodged in the bosom of eternal things?

XLIX

SUGGESTED BY A PICTURE OF
THE BIRD OF PARADISE

THE gentlest Poet, with free thoughts
 endowed,
 And a true master of the glowing strain,
 Might scan the narrow province with disdain
 That to the Painter's skill is here allowed.
 This, this the Bird of Paradise! disclaim
 The daring thought, forget the name;
 This the Sun's Bird, whom Glendoveers
 might own
 As no unworthy Partner in their flight
 Through seas of ether, where the ruffling
 sway
 Of nether air's rude billows is unknown;
 Whom Sylphs, if e'er for casual pastime
 they
 Through India's spicy regions wing their
 way,
 Might bow to as their Lord. What
 character
 O sovereign Nature! I appeal to thee,
 Of all thy feathered progeny
 Is so unearthly, and what shape so
 fair?
 So richly decked in variegated down,
 Green, sable, shining yellow, shadowy
 brown,
 Tints softly with each other blended,
 Hues doubtfully begun and ended;
 Or intershooting, and to sight
 Lost and recovered, as the rays of light
 Glance on the conscious plumes touched
 here and there?
 Full surely, when with such proud
 gifts of life
 Began the pencil's strife,
 O'erweening Art was caught as in a
 snare.
 A sense of seemingly presumptuous
 wrong
 Gave the first impulse to the Poet's
 song;
 But, of his scorn repenting soon, he
 drew
 A juster judgment from a calmer view;
 And, with a spirit freed from discontent,
 Thankfully took an effort that was meant
 Not with God's bounty, Nature's love,
 to vie,
 Or made with hope to please that
 inward eye
 Which ever strives in vain itself to
 satisfy,

But to recall the truth by some faint
trace
Of power ethereal and celestial grace,
That in the living Creature find on
earth a place.

L

A JEWISH FAMILY

(IN A SMALL VALLEY OPPOSITE ST. GOAR.
UPON THE RHINE)

GENIUS of Raphael ! if thy wings
Might bear thee to this glen,
With faithful memory left of things
To pencil dear and pen,
Thou would'st forego the neighbouring
Rhine,
And all his majesty—
A studious forehead to incline
O'er this poor family.

The Mother—her thou must have seen.
In spirit, ere she came
To dwell these rifted rocks between,
Or found on earth a name ;
An image, too, of that sweet Boy.
Thy inspirations give—
Of playfulness, and love, and joy,
Predestined here to live.

Downcast, or shooting glances far,
How beautiful his eyes,
That blend the nature of the star
With that of summer skies !
I speak as if of sense beguiled ;
Uncounted months are gone,
Yet am I with the Jewish Child,
That exquisite Saint John.

I see the dark-brown curls, the brow,
The smooth transparent skin,
Refined, as with intent to show
The holiness within ;
The grace of parting infancy
By blushes yet untamed ;
Age faithful to the mother's knee,
Nor of her arms ashamed.

Two lovely Sisters, still and sweet
As flowers, stand side by side ;
Their soul-subduing looks might cheat
The Christian of his pride :
Such beauty hath the Eternal poured
Upon them not forlorn,
Though of a lineage once abhorred,
Nor yet redeemed from scorn.

Mysterious safeguard, that, in spite
Of poverty and wrong,
Doth here preserve a living light.
From Hebrew fountains sprung ;
That gives this ragged group to cast
Around the dell a gleam
Of Palestine, of glory past,
And proud Jerusalem !

1828.

LI

ON THE POWER OF SOUND

ARGUMENT

The Ear addressed, as occupied by a spiritual
functionary, in communion with sounds,
individual, or combined in studied harmony.
—Sources and effects of those sounds (to the
close of 6th Stanza).—The power of music,
whence proceeding, exemplified in the idiom.
—Origin of music, and its effect in early ages
—how produced (to the middle of 10th
Stanza).—The mind recalled to sounds acting
casually and severally.—Wish uttered (11th
Stanza) that these could be united into a
scheme or system for moral interests and
intellectual contemplation.—(Stanza 12th).
The Pythagorean theory of numbers and
music, with their supposed power over the
motions of the universe—imaginings consonant
with such a theory.—Wish expressed
(in 11th Stanza) realised, in some degree,
by the representation of all sounds under
the form of thanksgiving to the Creator.—
(Last Stanza) the destruction of earth and
the planetary system—the survival of audible
harmony, and its support in the Divine
Nature, as revealed in Holy Writ.

I

Thy functions are ethereal,
As if within thee dwelt a glancing mind,
Organ of vision ! And a Spirit aerial
Informs the cell of Hearing, dark and
blind ; [thought
Intricate labyrinth, more dread for
To enter than oracular cave ;
Strict passage, through which sighs are
brought,
And whispers for the heart, their slave ;
And shrieks, that revel in abuse
Of shivering flesh ; and warbled air,
Whose piercing sweetness can unloose
The chains of frenzy, or entice a smile
Into the ambush of despair ;
Hosannas pealing down the long-drawn
aisle,
And requiems answered by the pulse
that beats
Dovoutly, in life's last retreats !

II

The headlong streams and fountains
Serve Thee, invisible Spirit, with untired
powers ;
Cheering the wakeful tent on Syrian
mountains,
They lull perchance ten thousand thou-
sand flowers.
That roar, the prowling lion's *Here I am*,
How fearful to the desert wide !
That bleat, how tender ! of the dam
Calling a straggler to her side.
Shout, cuckoo !—let the vernal soul
Go with thee to the frozen zone ;
Toll from thy loftiest perch, lone bell-
bird, toll !

At the still hour to Mercy dear,
 Mercy from her twilight throne
 Listening to nun's faint throb of holy
 fear,
 To sailor's prayer breathed from a
 darkening sea,
 Or widow's cottage-lullaby.

III

Ye Voices, and ye Shadows
 And images of voice—to hound and
 horn
 From rocky steep and rock-bestudded
 meadows
 Flung back, and, in the sky's blue caves,
 reborn—
 On with your pastime ! till the church-
 tower bells

A greeting give of measured glee ;
 And milder echoes from their cells
 Repeat the bridal symphony.
 Then, or far earlier, let us rove
 Where mists are breaking up or gone,
 And from aloft look down into a cove
 Besprinkled with a careless quire,
 Happy milk-maids, one by one
 Scattering a ditty each to her desire,
 A liquid concert matchless by nice Art,
 A stream as if from one full heart.

IV

Blest be the song that brightens
 The blind man's gloom, exalts the
 veteran's mirth ;
 Unscorned the peasant's whistling breath,
 that lightens
 His duteous toil of furrowing the green
 earth.
 For the tired slave, Song lifts the languid
 oar,
 And bids it aptly fall, with chime
 That beautifies the fairest shore.
 And mitigates the harshest clime.
 Yon pilgrims see—in lagging file
 They move ; but soon the appointed
 way
 A choral *Ave Marie* shall beguile,
 And to their hope the distant shrine
 Glisten with a livelier ray :
 Nor fearless he, the prisoner of the
 mine,
 Who from the well-spring of his own
 clear breast
 Can draw, and sing his griefs to rest.

V

When civic renovation
 Dawns on a kingdom, and for needful
 haste
 Best eloquence avails not, Inspiration
 Mounts with a tune, that travels like
 a blast
 Piping through cave and battlemented
 tower ;

Then starts the sluggard, pleased to
 meet
 That voice of Freedom, in its power
 Of promises, shrill, wild, and sweet !
 Who, from a martial pageant, spreads
 Incitements of a battle-day,
 Thrilling the unweaponed crowd with
 plumeless heads ?—
 Even she whose Lydian airs inspire
 Peaceful striving, gentle play
 Of timid hope and innocent desire
 Shot from the dancing Graces, as they
 move
 Fanned by the plausible wings of Love.

VI

How oft along thy mazes,
 Regent of sound, have dangerous Pas-
 sions trod !
 O Thou, through whom the temple
 ring with praises,
 And blackening clouds in thunder
 speak of God,
 Betray not by the coverage of sense
 Thy votaries, woefully resigned
 To a voluptuous influence
 That taints the purer, better, mind ;
 But lead sick Fancy to a harp
 That path in noble tasks been tried ;
 And, if the virtuous feel a pang too
 sharp,

Soothe it into patience,—stay
 The uplifted arm of Suicide ;
 And let some mood of thine in firm array
 Knit every thought the impending
 issue needs,
 Ere martyr burns, or patriot bleeds !

VII

As Conscience, to the centre
 Of being, smites with irresistible pain
 So shall a solemn cadence, if it enter
 The mouldy vaults of the dull idiot's
 brain,
 Transmute him to a wretch from quiet
 hurled—
 Convulsed as by a jarring din ;
 And then aghast, as at the world
 Of reason partially let in
 By concords winding with a sway
 Terrible for sense and soul !
 Or, awed he weeps, struggling to quell
 dismay.

Point not these mysteries to an Art
 Lodged above the starry pole ;
 Pure modulations flowing from the heart
 Of divine Love, where Wisdom, Beauty,
 Truth
 With Order dwell, in endless youth ?

VIII

Oblivion may not cover
 All treasures hoarded by the miser,
 Time.

Orphean Insight! truth's undaunted
lover,
To the first leagues of tutored passion
climb.

When Music deigned within this grosser
sphere

Her subtle essence to enfold,
And voice and shell drew forth a tear
Softer than Nature's self could mould.
Yet strenuous was the infant Age:
Art, daring because souls could feel,
Stirred nowhere but an urgent equipage
Of rapt imagination sped her march
Through the realms of woe and weal:
Hell to the lyre bowed low; the upper
arch

Rejoiced that clamorous spell and magic
verse

Her wan disasters could disperse.

IX

The Gift to king Amphion
That walled a city with its melody
Was for belief's dream:—thy skill,
Arion!

Could humanise the creatures of the
sea,

Where men were monsters. A last
grace he craves.

Leave for one chant;—the dulcet sound
Steals from the deck o'er willing waves,
And listening dolphins gather round.

Self-cast, as with a desperate course,
Mid that strange audience, he hestrides
A proud One docile as a managed horse;
And singing, while the accordant hand
Sweeps his harp, the Master rides:
So shall he touch at length a friendly
strand,

And he, with his preserver, shine
star-bright

In memory, through silent night.

X

The pipe of Pan, to shepherds
Couched in the shadow of Mænanian
pines,

Was passing sweet; the eyeballs of the
leopards,

That in high triumph drew the Lord of
vines,

How did they sparkle to the cymbal's
clang!

While Fauns and Satyrs beat the ground
In cadence,—and Silenus swang

This way and that, with wild flowers
crowned.

To life, to life give back thine ear:

Ye who are longing to be rid
Of fable, though to truth subservient,
hear

The little springing of cold earth that
fell

Echoed from the coffin-lid;

The convict's summons in the steeple's
knell;

"The vain distress-gun," from a leeward
shore.

Repeated—heard, and heard no more!

XI

For terror, joy, or pity,

Vast is the compass and the swell of
notes:

From the babe's first cry to voice of
regal city,

Rolling a solemn sea-like bass, that
soats

Far as the woodlands—with the trill
to blend.

Of that shy songstress, whose love-tale
Might tempt an angel to descend,

While hovering o'er the moonlight vale.
Ye wandering Uterances, has earth no
scheme,

No scale of moral music—to unite
Powers that survive but in the faintest
dream

Of memory?—O that ye might stoop
to bear

Chains, such precious chains of sight
As laboured minstrelries through ages
wear!

O for a balance fit the truth to tell
Of the Unsubstantial, pondered well!

XII

By one pervading spirit

Of tones and numbers all things are
controlled,

As sages taught, where faith was found
to merit

Initiation in that mystery old.
The heavens, whose aspect makes our
minds as still

As they themselves appear to be,
Innumerable voices fill

With everlasting harmony;
The towering headlands, crowned with
mist,

Their feet among the billows, know
That Ocean is a mighty harmonist:

Thy pinions, universal Air,
Ever waving to and fro,

Are delegates of harmony, and bear
Strains that support the Seasons in
their round;

Stern Winter loves a dirge-like sound.

XIII

Break forth into thanksgiving,
Ye banded instruments of wind and
chords;

Unite, to magnify the Ever living,
Your inarticulate notes with the voice of
words!

Nor hushed be service from the lowing
mead,
Nor mute the forest hum of noon;

Thou too be heard, lone eagle ! freed
 From snowy peak and cloud, attune
 Thy hungry barkings to the hymn
 Of joy, that from her utmost walls
 The six-days' Work, by flaming Seraphim
 Transmits to Heaven ! As Deep to Deep
 Shouting through one valley calls,
 All worlds, all natures, mood and measure
 keep
 For praise and ceaseless gratulation,
 poured
 Into the ear of God, their Lord !

XIV

A Voice to Light gave Being :
 To Time, and Man his earthborn
 chronicler ;
 A Voice shall finish doubt and dim
 foreseeing,

And sweep away life's visionary stir ;
 The trumpet (we, intoxicate with pride,
 Arm at its blast for deadly wars)
 To archangelic lips applied,
 The grave shall open, quench the stars.
 O Silence ! are Man's noisy years
 No more than moments of thy life ?
 Is Harmony, blest queen of smiles
 and tears,
 With her smooth tones and discords
 just,
 Tempered into rapturous strife,
 Thy destined bond-slave ? • No ! though
 earth be dust
 And vanish, though the heavens dissolve,
 her stay
 Is in the Word, that shall not pass
 away.

1828.

PETER BELL

A TALE

What's in a Name ?

Brutus will start a Spirit as soon as Cæsar !

TO ROBERT SOUTHEY, ESQ., P.L., &c., &c.

MY DEAR FRIEND,

The Tale of Peter Bell, which I now introduce to your notice, and to that of the Public, has, in its Manuscript state, nearly survived its minority :—for it first saw the light in the summer of 1798. During this long interval, pains have been taken at different times to make the production less unworthy of a favourable reception ; or, rather, to fit it for filling permanently a station, however humble, in the Literature of our Country. This has, indeed, been the aim of all my endeavours in Poetry, which, you know, have been sufficiently laborious to prove that I deem the Art not lightly to be approached ; and that the attainment of excellence in it, may laudably be made the principal object of intellectual pursuit by any man, who, with reasonable consideration of circumstances, has faith in his own impulses.

The Poem of Peter Bell, as the Prologue will show, was composed under a belief that the Imagination not only does not require for its exercise the intervention of supernatural agency, but that, though such agency be excluded, the faculty may be called forth as imperiously and for kindred results of pleasure, by incidents, within the compass of poetic probability, in the humblest departments of daily life. Since that Prologue was written, you have exhibited most splendid effects of judicious daring, in the opposite and usual course. Let this acknowledgment make my peace with the lovers of the supernatural ; and I am persuaded it will be admitted, that to you, as a Master in that province of the art, the following Tale, whether from contrast or congruity, is not an inappropriate offering. Accept it, then, as a public testimony of affectionate admiration from one with whose name yours has been often coupled (to use your own words) for evil and for good ; and believe me to be, with earnest wishes that life and health may be granted you to complete the many important works in which you are engaged, and with high respect,

Most faithfully yours,

WILLIAM WORDSWORTH.

RYDAL MOUNT, April 7, 1819.

PROLOGUE

THERE'S something in a flying horse,
 There's something in a huge balloon ;
 But through the clouds I'll never float
 Until I have a little Boat,
 Shaped like the crescent-moon.

And now I have a little Boat.
 In shape a very crescent-moon :
 Fast through the clouds my boat can
 sail ;

But if perchance your faith should fail,
 Look up—and you shall see me soon !

The woods, my Friends, are round
 you roaring,
 Rocking and roaring like a sea ;
 The noise of danger's in your ears,
 And ye have all a thousand fears
 Both for my little Boat and me !

Meanwhile untroubled admire
 The pointed horns of my canoe ;

And, did not pity touch my breast,
To see how ye are all distrest,
Till my ribs ached, I'd laugh at you !

Away we go, my Boat and I—
Frail man ne'er sate in such another ;
Whether among the winds we strive,
Or deep into the clouds we dive,
Each is contented with the other.

Away we go—and what care we
For treasons, tumults, and for wars ?
We are as calm in our delight
As is the crescent-moon so bright
Among the scattered stars.

Up goes my Boat among the stars
Through many a breathless field of
light,

Through many a long blue field o' ether,
Leaving ten thousand stars behing
her :

Up goes my little Boat so bright !

The Crab, the Scorpion, and the Bull—
We pry among them all ; have shot
High o'er the red-haired race of Mars,
Covered from top to toe with scars ;
Such company I like it not !

The towns in Saturn are decayed,
The melancholy Spectres throng them ;—
The Pleiads, that appear to kiss
Each other in the vast abyss,
With joy I sail among them.

Swift Mercury resounds with mirth,
Great Jove is full of stately bowers ;
But these, and all that they contain,
What are they to that tiny grain,
That little Earth of ours ?

Then back to Earth, the dear green
Earth :—

Whole ages if I here should roam,
The world for my remarks and me
Would not a whit the better be ;
I've left my heart at home.

See ! there she is, the matchless Earth !
There spreads the famed Pacific Ocean !
And Andes thrusts yon craggy spear
Through the grey clouds ; the Alps
are here.

Like waters in commotion !

Yon tawny slip is Libya's sands ;
That silver thread the river Dnieper ;
And look, where clothed in brightest
green

Is a sweet Isle, of isles the Queen ;
Ye fairies, from all evil keep her !

And see the town where I was born !
Around those happy fields we span
In boyish gambols :—I was lost
Where I have been, but on this coast
I feel I am a man.

W.P.

Never did fifty things at once
Appear so lovely, never, never ;—
How tunelessly the forests ring !
To hear the earth's soft murmuring
Thus could I hang for ever !

"Shame on you!" cried my little
Boat,

"Was ever such a homesick Loon,
Within a living Boat to sit,
And make no better use of it :
A Boat twin-sister of the crescent-moon

Ne'er in the breast of full-grown Poet
Fluttered so faint a heart before ;—
Was it the music of the spheres
That overpowered your mortal ears ?
—Such din shall trouble them no more.

These nether precincts do not lack
Charms of their own ;—then come
with me ;

I want a comrade, and for you
There's nothing that I would not do ;
Nought is there that you shall not see.

Haste ! and above Siberian snows
We'll sport amid the boreal morning ;
Will mingle with her lustrous gliding
Among the stars, the stars now hiding,
And now the stars adorning.

I know the secrets of a land
Where human foot did never stray ;
Fair is that land as evening skies,
And cool, though in the depth it lies
Of burning Africa.

Or we'll into the realm of Faery,
Among the lovely shades of things ;
The shadowy forms of mountains bare,
And streams, and bowers, and ladies
fair.

The shades of palaces and kings !

Or, if you thirst with hardy zeal
Less quiet regions to explore,
Prompt voyage shall to you reveal
How earth and heaven are taught to
feel

The might of magic lore ! "

"My little vagrant Form of light,
My gay and beautiful Canoe,
Well have you played your friendly
part ;
As kindly take what from my heart
Experience forces—then adieu !

Temptation lurks among your words ;
But, while these pleasures you're pursu-
ing

Without impediment or let,
No wonder if you quite forget
What on the earth is doing..

There was a time when all mankind
Did listen with a faith sincere
To tuneful tongues in mystery versed ;
Then Poets fearlessly rehearsed
The wonders of a wild career.

Go—(but the world 's a sleepy world,
And 'tis, I fear, an age too late)
Take with you some ambitious Youth !
For, restless Wanderer ! I, in truth,
Am all unfit to be your mate.

Long have I loved what I behold,
The night that calms, the day that
cheers :

The common growth of mother-earth
Suffices me—her tears, her mirth,
Her humblest mirth and tears.

The dragon's wing, the magic ring,
I shall not covet for my dower,
If I along that lowly way
With sympathetic heart may stray,
And with a soul of power.

These given, what more need I desire
To stir, to soothe, or elevate ?
What nobler marvels than the mind
May in life's daily prospect find,
May find or there create ?

A potent wand doth Sorrow wield ;
What spell so strong as guilty Fear !
Repentance is a tender Sprite ;
If aught on earth have heavenly night,
'Tis lodged within her silent tear.

But grant my wishes,—let us now
Descend from this ethereal height ;
Then take thy way, adventurous Skiff,
More daring far than Hippogriff,
And be thy own delight !

To the stone-table in my garden,
Loved haunt of many a summer hour,
The Squire is come : his daughter Bess
Beside him in the cool recess
Sits blooming like a flower.

With these are many more convened ;
They know not I have been so far ;—
I see them there, in number nine,
Beneath the spreading Weymouth-pine !
I see them—there they are !

There sits the Vicar and his Dame ;
And there my good friend. Stephen
Otter ;

And, ere the light of evening fail,
To them I must relate the Tale
Of Peter Bell the Potter."

Off flew the Boat—away she flies,
Spurning her freight with indignation !
And I, as well as I was able,
On two poor legs, toward my stone-table
Limped on with sore vexation.

"O, here he is!" cried little Bess—
She saw me at the garden-door ;
"We've waited anxiously and long."
They cried, and all around me throng,
Full nine of them or more !

"Reproach me not—your fears be still—
Be thankful we again have met :—
Resume, my Friends ! within the shade
Your seats, and quickly shall be paid
The well-remembered debt."

I spake with faltering voice, like one
Not wholly rescued from the pale
Of a wild dream, or worse illusion ;
But, straight, to cover my confusion,
Began the promised Tale.

PART FIRST

A. 1. By the moonlight river side
Groan'd the poor Beast—alas ! in vain ;
The staff was raised to loftier height,
And the blows fell with heavier weight
As Peter struck—and struck again.

"Hold !" cried the Squire, "against
the rule"

Of common sense you're surely sinning ;
This leap is for us all too bold ;
Who Peter was, let that be told,
And start from the beginning."

—"A Potter, Sir, he was by trade,"
Said I, becoming quite collected ;
"And wheresoever he appeared,
Full twenty times was Peter feared
For once that Peter was respected.

He, two-and-thirty years or more,
Had been a wild and woodland rover ;
Had heard the Atlantic surges roar
On farthest Cornwall's rocky shore,
And trod the cliffs of Dover.

And he had seen Caernarvon's towers,
And well he knew the spire of Sarum
And he had been where Lincoln bell
Flings o'er the fen that ponderous knell—
A far-renowned alarum !

At Doncaster, at York, and Leeds,
And merry Carlisle had he been ;
And all along the Lowlands fair,
All through the bonny shire of Ayr ;
And far as Aberdeen.

And he had been at Inverness ;
And Peter, by the mountain-rills,
Had danced his round with Highland
lasses :

And he had lain beside his asses
On lofty Cheviot Hills :

And he had trudged through Yorkshire
dales,
Among the rocks and winding sciers ;

¹ In the dialect of the North, a hawker of
earthenware is thus designated.

Where deep and low the hamlets lie
Beneath their little patch of sky*
And little lot of stars :

And all along the indented coast,
Bespattered with the salt-sea foam ;
Where'er a knot of houses lay
On headland, or in hollow bay ; —
Sure never man like him did roam !

As well might Peter, in the Fleet,
Have been ~~not~~ bound, a begging debt-
or ; —

He travelled here, he travelled there ; —
But not the value of a hair
Was heart or head the better.

He roved among the vales and streams,
In the green wood and hollow dell ;
They were his dwellings night and day, —
But nature ne'er could find the way
Into the heart of Peter Bell.

In vain, through every changeful year,
Did Nature lead him as before ;
A primrose by a river's brim
A yellow primrose was to him,
And it was nothing more.

Small change it made in Peter's heart
To see his gentle panniered train
With more than verbal pleasure feeding.
Where'er the tender grass was leading
Its earliest green along the lane.

In vain, through water, earth, and air,
The soul of happy sound was spread,
When Peter on some April morn,
Beneath the broom or budding thorn,
Made the warm earth his lazy bed.

At noon, when, by the forest's edge
He lay beneath the branches high,
The soft blue sky did never melt
Into his heart ; he never felt
The witchery of the soft blue sky !

On a fair prospect some have looked
And felt, as I have heard them say,
As if the moving time had been
A thing as steadfast as the scene
On which they gazed themselves away.

Within the breast of Peter Bell
These silent raptures found no place ;
He was a Carl as wild and rude
As ever hue-and-cry pursued,
As ever ran a felon's race.

Of all that lead a lawless life,
Of all that love their lawless lives,*
In city or in village small,
He was the wildest far of all ; —
He had a dozen wedded wives.

Nay, start not — wedded wives — and
twelve ! [him,
But how one wife could e'er come near
In simple truth I cannot tell ;

For, be it said of Peter Bell,
To see him was to fear him.

Though Nature could not touch his
heart

By lovely forms, and silent weather,
And tender sounds, yet you might see
At once, that Peter Bell and she
Had often been together.

A savage wildness round him hung
As of a dweller out of doors ;
In his whole figure and his mien
A savage character was seen
Of mountains and of dreary moors.

To all the unshaped half-human thoughts
Which solitary Nature feeds
'Mid summer storms or winter's ice,
Had Peter joined whatever vice
The cruel city breeds.

His face was keen as is the wind
That cuts along the hawthorn-fence ;
Of courage you saw little there,
But, in its stead, a medley air
Of running and of impudence.

He had a dark and sidelong walk.
And long and slouching was his gait ;
Beneath his looks so bare and bold,
You might perceive, his spirit cold
Was playing with some inward bait.

His forehead wrinkled was and furred,
A work, one half of which was done
By thinking of his "whens" and "hows ;"
And half, by knitting of his brows
Beneath the glaring sun.

There was a hardness in his cheek,
There was a hardness in his eye,
As if the man had fixed his face,
In many a solitary place,
Against the wind and open sky ! "

ONE NIGHT, (and now my little Bess !
We've reached at last the promised
Tale ;)

One beautiful November night,
When the full moon was shining bright
Upon the rapid river Swale,

Along the river's winding banks
Peter was travelling all alone ; —
Whether to buy or sell, or led
By pleasure running in his head,
To me was never known.

He trudged along through copse and
brake,
He trudged along o'er hill and dale ;
Nor for the moon cared he a tittle,
And for the stars he cared as little,
And for the murmuring river Swale.

But, chancing to espy a path
That promised to cut short the way ;

As many a wiser man hath done,
He left a trusty guide for one
That might his steps betray.

To a thick wood he soon is brought
Where cheerily his course he weaves,
And whistling loud may yet be heard,
Though often buried, like a bird
Darkling, among the boughs and leaves.

But quickly Peter's mood is changed,
And on he drives with cheeks that burn
In downright fury and in wrath :—
There's little sign the treacherous path
Will to the road return !

The path grows dim, and dimmer still :
Now up, now down, the Rover wends,
With all the sail that he can carry,
Till brought to a deserted quarry—
And there the pathway ends.

He paused—for shadows of strange
shape,

Massy and black, before him lay ;
But through the dark, and through
the cold,

And through the yawning fissures old,
Did Peter boldly press his way

Right through the quarry :—and behold
A scene of soft and lovely hue !
Where blue and grey, and tender green,
Together make as sweet a scene
As ever human eye did view.

Beneath the clear blue sky he saw
A little field of meadow ground ;
But field or meadow name it not ;
Call it of earth a small green plot,
With rocks encompassed round.

The Swale flowed under the grey rocks,
But he flowed quiet and unseen :—
You need a strong and stormy gale
To bring the noises of the Swale
To that green spot, so calm and green !

And is there no one dwelling here,
No hermit with his beads and glass ?
And does no little cottage look
Upon this soft and fertile nook ?
Does no one live near this green grass ?

Across the deep and quiet spot
Is Peter driving through the grass—
And now has reached the skirting trees ;
When, turning round his head, he sees
A solitary Ass.

"A prize !" cries Peter—but he first
Must spy about him far and near :
There's not a single house in sight,
No woodman's hut, no cottage light—
Peter, you need not fear !

There's nothing to be seen but woods,
And rocks that spread a hoary gleam,

And this one Beast, that from the bed
Of the green meadow hangs his head
Over the silent stream.

His head is with a halter bound ;
The halter seizing, Peter leapt
Upon the Creature's back, and plied
With ready heels his shaggy side ;
But still the Ass his station kept.

Then Peter gave a sudden jerk,
A jerk that from a dungeon-floor
Would have pulled up an iron ring ;
But still the heavy-headed Thing
Stood just as he had stood before !

Quoth Peter, leaping from his seat,
"There is some plot against me laid ;"
Once more the little meadow-ground
And all the hoary cliffs around
He cautiously surveyed.

All, all is silent—rocks and woods,
All still and silent—far and near !
Only the Ass, with motion dull,
Upon the pivot of his skull
Turns round 'tis long left ear.

Thought Peter, What can mean all
this ?

Some ugly witchcraft must be here !
—Once more the Ass, with motion dull,
Upon the pivot of his skull
Turned round his long left ear.

Suspicion ripened into dread ;
Yet with deliberate action slow,
His staff high-raising, in the pride
Of skill, upon the sounding hide,
He dealt a sturdy blow.

The poor Ass staggered with the shock ;
And then, as if to take his ease,
In quiet uncomplaining mood,
Upon the spot where he had stood,
Dropped gently down upon his knees ;

As gently on his side he fell ;
And by the river's brink did lie ;
And, while he lay like one that mourned,
The patient Beast on Peter turned
His shining hazel eye.

'Twas but one mild, reproachful look,
A look more tender than severe ;
And straight in sorrow, not in dread,
He turned the eye-ball in his head
Towards the smooth river deep and clear.

Upon the Beast the sapling rings ;
His lank sides heaved, his limbs they
stirred ;

He gave a groan, and then another,
Of that which went before the brother,
And then he gave a third.

All by the moonlight river side
He gave three miserable groans ;

And not till now hath Peter seen
How gaunt the Creature is,—how lean
And sharp his staring bones !

With legs stretched out and stiff he lay :—
No word of kind commiseration
Fell at the sight from Peter's tongue ;
With hard contempt his heart was wrung,
With hatred and vexation.

The meagre beast lay still as death ;
And Peter slips with fury quiver ;
Quoth he, " You little mulish dog,
I'll fling your carcass like a log
Head-foremost down the river ! "

An impious oath confirmed the threat—
Whereat from the earth on which he lay
To all the echoes, south and north.
And east and west, the Ass sent forth
A long and clamorous bray !

This outcry, on the heart of Peter,
Seems like a note of joy to strike,—
Joy at the heart of Peter knocks ;
But in the echo of the rocks
Was something Peter did not like.

Whether to cheer his coward breast,
Or that he could not break the chain,
In this serene and solemn hour,
Twined round him by demoniac power,
To the blind work he turned again.

Among the rocks and winding crags ;
Among the mountains far away ;
Once more the Ass did lengthen out
More ruefully a deep-drawn shout,
The hard dry see-saw of his horrible bray !

What is there now in Peter's heart !
Or whence the might of this strange
sound ?

The moon uneasy looked and dimmer,
The broad blue heavens appeared to
glimmer,
And the rocks staggered all around—

From Peter's hand the sapling dropped !
Threat has he none to execute ;
" If any one should come and see
That I am here, they'll think," quoth he,
" I'm helping this poor dying brute."

He scans the Ass from limb to limb,
And ventures now to uplift his eyes ;
More steady looks the moon, and clear,
More like themselves the rocks appear
And touch more quiet skies.

His scorn returns—his hate revives ;
He stoops the Ass's neck to seize
With malice—that again takes flight ;
For in the pool a startling sight
Meets him, among the inverted trees.

Is it the moon's distorted face ?
The ghost-like image of a cloud ?

Is it a gallows there portrayed ?
Is Peter of himself afraid ?
Is it a coffin,—or a shroud ?

A grisly idol hewn in stone ?
Or imp from witch's lap let fall ?
Perhaps a ring of shining fairies ?
Such as pursue their feared vagaries
In sylvan bower, or haunted hall ?

Is it a fiend that to a stake
Of fire his desperate self is tethering ?
Or stubborn spirit doomed to yell
In solitary ward or cell,
Ten thousand miles from all his brethren ?

Never did pulse so quickly throb,
And never heart so loudly panted ;
He looks, he cannot choose but look ;
Like some one reading in a book—
A book that is enchanted.

Ah, well a day for Peter Bell !
He will be turned to iron soon,
Meet Statue for the court of Fear !
His hat is up—and every hair
Bristles, and whitens in the moon !

He looks, he ponders, looks again ;
He sees a motion—hears a groan ;
His eyes will burst—his heart will break—
He gives a loud and frightful shriek,
And back he falls, as if his life were
flown !

PART SECOND

WE left our Hero in a trance,
Beneath the alders, near the river ;
The Ass is by the river-side.
And, where the feeble breezes glide,
Upon the stream the moonbeams quiver.

A happy respite ! but at length
He feels the glimmering of the moon ;
Wakes with glazed eye, and feebly sigh-
ing—

To sink, perhaps, where he is lying,
Into a second swoon !

He lifts his head, he sees his staff ;
He touches—'tis to him a treasure !
Faint recollection seems to tell
That he is yet where mortals dwell—
A thought received with languid
pleasure !

His head upon his elbow propped,
Becoming less and less perplexed,
Sky-ward he looks—to rock and wood—
And then—upon the glassy flood
His wandering eye is fixed.

Thought he, that is the face of one
In his last sleep securely bound !
So toward the stream his head he bent,
And downward thrust his staff, intent
The river's depth to sound. ,

Now—like a tempest-shattered bark,
That overwhelmed and prostrate lies,
And in a moment to the verge
Is lifted of a foaming surge—
Full suddenly the Ass doth rise !

His staring bones all shake with joy,
And close by Peter's side he stands :
While Peter o'er the river bends,
The little Ass his neck extends,
And fondly licks his hands.

Such life is in the Ass's eyes,
Such life is in his limbs and ears ;
That Peter Bell, if he had been
The veriest coward ever seen,
Must now have thrown aside his fears.

The Ass looks on—and to his work
Is Peter quietly resigned ;
He touches here—he touches there—
And now among the dead man's hair
His sapling Peter has entwined.

He pulls—and looks—and pulls again ;
And he whom the poor Ass has lost,
The man who had been four days dead,
Head-foremost from the river's bed
Uprises like a ghost !

And Peter draws him to dry land :
And through the brain of Peter pass
Some poignant twitches, fast and faster :
"No doubt," quoth he, "he is the
Master

Of this poor miserable Ass !"

The meagre Shadow that looks on—
What would he now ? what is he doing ?
His sudden fit of joy is flown,—
He on his knees hath laid him down,
As if he were his grief renewing ;

But no—that Peter on his back
Must mount, he shews well as he can :
Thought Peter then, come weal or woe,
I'll do what he would have me do,
In pity to this poor drowned man.

With that resolve he boldly mounts
Upon the pleased and thankful Ass ;
And then, without a moment's stay,
That earnest Creature turned away,
Leaving the body on the grass.

Intent upon his faithful watch,
The Beast four days and nights had
past ;

A sweeter meadow ne'er was seen,
And there the Ass four days had been,
Nor ever once did break his fast :

Yet firm his step, and stout his heart ;
The mead is crossed—the quarry's
mouth

Is reached ; but there the trusty guide
Into a thicket turns aside,
And deftly ambles towards the south.

When hark a burst of doleful sound !
And Peter honestly might say,
The like came never to his ears,
Though he has been, full thirty years,
A rover—night and day !

'Tis not a plover of the moors,
'Tis not a bittern of the fen ;
Nor caw it be a barking fox,
Nor night-bird chambered in the
rocks,
Nor wild-cat in a woody glen !

The Ass is startled—and steps short
Right in the middle of the thicket ;
And Peter, wont to whistle loud
Whether alone or in a crowd,
Is silent as a silent cricket.

What ails you now, my little Bess ?
Why may you tremble and look grave !
This cry—that rings along the wood,
This cry—that floats adown the flood,
Comes from the entrance of a cave :

I see a blooming Wood-boy there,
And, if I had the power to say
How sorrowful the wangler is,
Your heart would be as sad as his
Till you had kissed his tears away !

Grasping a hawthorn branch in hand,
All bright with berries ripe and red,
Into the cavern's mouth he peeps ;
Thence back into the moonlight creeps ;
Whom seeks he—whom ?—the silent
dead :

His father !—Him doth he require—
Him hath he sought with fruitless pains,
Among the rocks, behind the trees ;
Now creeping on his hands and knees,
Now running o'er the open plains.

And hither is he come at last,
When he through such a day has gone,
By this dark cave to be distressed
Like a poor bird—her plundered nest
Hovering around with dolorous moan !

Of that intense and piercing cry
The listening Ass conjectures well ;
Wild as it is, he there can read
Some intermingled notes that plead
With touches irresistible.

But Peter—when he saw the Ass
Not only stop but turn, and change
The cherished tenor of his pace
That lamentable cry to chase—
It wrought in him conviction strange ;

A faith that, for the dead man's sake
And this poor slave who loved him
well,

Vengeance upon his head will fall,
Some visitation worse than all
Which ever till this night befel.

Meanwhile the Ass to reach his home,
Is striving stoutly as he may ;
But, while he climbs the woody hill,
The ~~Ass~~ grows weak—and weaker still :
And now at last it dies away.

So with his freight the Creature turns
Into a gloomy grove of beech,
Along the shade with footsteps true
Descending slowly, till the two
The open moonlight reach.

And there, along the narrow dell,
A fair smooth pathway you discern,
A length of green and open road—
As if it from a fountain flowed—
Winding away between the fern.

The rocks that tower on either side
Build up a wild fantastic scene :
Temples like those among the Hindoos,
And mosques, and spires, and abbey
windows,

And castles all with ivy green !

And, while the Ass pursues his way,
Along this solitary dell,
As pensively his steps advance, [ance.
The mosques and spires change counten-
And look at Peter Bell !

That unintelligible cry
Hath left him high in preparation,—
Convinced that he, or soon or late,
This very night will meet his fate—
And so he sits in expectation !

The strenuous Animal hath clomb
With the green path : and now he
wends

Where, shining like the smoothest sea,
In undisturbed immensity
A level plain extends.

But whence this faintly-rustling sound
By which the journeying pair are
chased ?

—A withered leaf is close behind,
Light plaything for the sportive wind
Upon that solitary waste.

When Peter spied the moving thing,
It only doubled his distress :
“ Where there is not a bush or tree,
The very leaves they follow me—
So huge hath been my wickedness ! ”

To a close lane they now are come,
Where, as before, the enduring Ass
Moves on without a moment's stop,
Nor once turns round his head to crop
A bramble-leaf or blade of grass.

Between the hedges as they go,
The white dust sleeps upon the lane ;
And Peter, even and anon
Back-looking, sees, upon a stone,
Or in the dust, a crimson stain.

A stain—as of a drop of blood
By moonlight made more faint and
wan ;

Ha ! why these sinkings of despair ?
He knows not how the blood comes
there—
And Peter is a wicked man.

At length he spies a bleeding wound,
Where he had struck the Ass's head ;
He sees the blood, knows what it is,—
A glimpse of sudden joy was his,
But then it quickly fled :

Of him whom sudden death had seized
He thought,—of thee, O faithful Ass !
And once again those ghastly pains,
Shoot to and fro through heart and
reins,
And through his brain like lightning
pass.

PART THIRD

I've heard of one, a gentle Soul,
Though given to sadness and to gloom,
And for the fact will vouch,—one night
It chanced that by a taper's light
This man was reading in his room ;

Bending, as you or I might bend
At night o'er any pious book,
When sudden blackness overspread
The snow-white page on which he read,
And made the good man round him
look.

The chamber walls were dark all
round,—

And to his book he turned again ;
—The light had left the lonely taper,
And formed itself upon the paper
Into large letters— bright and plain !

The godly book was in his hand—
And, on the page, more black than coal
Appeared, set forth in strange array,
A word—which to his dying day
Perplexed the good man's gentle soul.

The ghostly word, thus plainly seen,
Did never from his lips depart ;
But he hath said, poor gentle wight !
It brought full many a sin to light
Out of the bottom of his heart.

Dread Spirits ! to confound the meek
Why wander from your course so far,
Disordering colour, form, and stature !
—Let good men feel the soul of nature,
And see things as they are.

Yet, potent Spirits ! well I know,
How ye, that play with soul and sense,
Are not unused to trouble friends
Of goodness, for most gracious ends—
And thus I speak in reverence !

But might I give advice to you,
Whom in my fear I love so well ;
From men of pensive virtue go,
Dread Beings ! and your empire show
On hearts like that of Peter Bell.

Your presence often have I felt
In darkness and the stormy night ;
And, with like force, if need there be,
Ye can put forth your agency
When earth is calm, and heaven is bright.

Then, coming from the wayward world,
That powerful world in which ye dwell,
Come, Spirits of the Mind ! and try'
To-night, beneath the moonlight sky,
What may be done with Peter Bell !

—O, would that some moreskilful voice
My further labour might prevent !
Kind Listeners, that around me sit,
I feel that I am all unfit
For such high argument.

I've played, I've danced, with my narra-
tion ;
I loitered long ere I began :
Ye waited then on my good pleasure ;
Pour out indulgence still, in measure
As liberal as ye can !

Our Travellers, ye remember well,
Are thridding a sequestered lane ;
And Peter many tricks is trying,
And many anodynes applying,
To ease his conscience of its pain.

By this his heart is lighter far ;
And, finding that he can account
So snugly for that crimson stain,
His evil spirit up again
Does like an empty bucket mount.

And Peter is a deep logician
Who hath no lack of wit mercurial ;
"Blood drops—leaves rustle—yet,"
quoeth he,
"This poor man never, but for me,
Could have had Christian burial.

And, say the best you can, 'tis plain,
That here has been some wicked dealing ;
No doubt the devil in me wrought ;
I'm not the man who could have thought
An Ass like this was worth the stealing !"

So from his pocket Peter takes
His shining horn tobacco-box ;
And, in a light and careless way,
As men who with their purpose play,
Upon the lid he knocks.

Let them whose voice can stop the clouds,
Whose cunning eye can see the wind,
Tell to a curious world the cause
Why, making here a sudden pause,
The Ass turned round his head, and
grinned.

Appalling process ! I have marked
The like on heath, in lonely wood ;
And, verily, have seldom met
A spectacle more hideous—yet
It suited Peter's present mood.

And, grinning in his turn, his teeth'
He in jocose defiance showed—
When, to upset his spiteful mirth,
A murmur, pent within the earth,
In the dead earth beneath the road,

Rolled audibly ! it swept along,
A muffled noise—a rumbling sound !—
'Twas by a troop of miners made,
Plying with gunpowder their trade,
Some twenty fathoms underground.

Small cause of dire effect ! for, surely,
If ever mortal, King or Coter,
Believed that earth was charged to quake
And yawn for his unworthy sake,
'Twas Peter Bell the Potter.

But, as an oak in breathless air
Will stand though to the centre hewn ;
Or as the weakest things if frost
Have stiffened them, maintain their post ;
So he, beneath the gazing moon !—

The Beast bestriding thus, he reached
A spot where, in a sheltering cove,
A little chapel stands alone,
With greenest ivy overgrown,
And tufted with an ivy grove ;

Dying insensibly away
From human thoughts and purposes,
It seemed—wall, window, roof and tower
—To bow to some transforming power,
And blend with the surrounding trees.

As ruinous a place it was,
Thought Peter, in the shire of Fife
That served my turn, when following still
From land to land a reckless will
I married my sixth wife !

The unheeding Ass moves slowly on,
And now is passing by an inn
Brim-full of a carousing crew,
That make, with curses not a few,
An uproar and a drunken din.

I cannot well express the thoughts
Which Peter in those noises found ;—
A stifling power compressed his frame,
While as a swimming darkness came
Over that dull and dreary sound.

For well did Peter know the sound ;
The language of those drunken joys
To him, a jovial soul, I ween,
But a few hours ago, had been
A gladsome and a welcome noise.

Now, turned adrift into the past,
He finds no solace in his course ;

Like planet-stricken men of yore,
He trembles, smitten to the core
By strong compunction and remorse.

But, more than all, his heart is stung
To think of one, almost a child ;
A sweet and playful Highland girl,
As light and beauteous as a squirrel,
As beauteous and as wild !

Her dwelling was a lonely house,
A cottage in a heathy dell ;
And she put on her gown of green,
And left her mother at sixteen,
And followed Peter Bell.

But many good and pious thoughts
Had she ; and, in the kirk to pray,
Two long Scotch miles, through rain or
snow,
To kirk she had been used to go,
Twice every Sabbath-day.

And, when she followed Peter Bell,
It was to lead an honest life ;
For he, with to him not used to falter
Had pledged his troth before the altar
To love her as his wedded wife.

A mother's hope is hers :—but soon
She drooped and pined like one forlorn ;
From Scripture she a name did borrow ;
Benoni, or the child of sorrow,
She called her babe unborn.

For she had learned how Peter lived,
And took it in most grievous part ;
She to the very bone was worn,
And, ere that little child was born,
Died of a broken heart.

And now the Spirits of the Mind
Are busy with poor Peter Bell :
Upon the rights of visual sense
Usurping, with a prevalence
More terrible than magic spell.

Close by a brake of flowering furze
(Above it shivering aspens play)
He sees an unsubstantial creature,
His very self in form and feature,
Not four yards from the broad highway.

And stretched beneath the furze he sees
The Highland girl—it is no other ;
And hears her crying as she cried,
The very moment that she died,
“ My mother ! oh my mother ! ”

The sweat pours down from Peter's face,
So grievous is his heart's contrition ;
With agony his eye-balls ache
While he beholds by the furze-brake
This miserable vision !

Calm is the well-deserving brute,
His peace hath no offence betrayed ;
But now, while down that slope he
wends,

A voice to Peter's ear ascends,
Resounding from the woody glade :

The voice, though clamorous as a horn
Re-echoed by a naked rock,
Comes from that tabernacle—List !
Within, a fervent Methodist
Is preaching to no heedless flock !

“ Repent ! repent ! ” he cries aloud,
“ While yet ye may find mercy ;—
strive

To love the Lord with all your might ;
Turn to him, seek him day and night,
And save your souls alive !

Repent ! repeat ! though ye have gone,
Through paths of wickedness and woe,
After the Babylonian harlot ;
And, though your sins be red as scarlet,
They shall be white as snow ! ”

Even as he passed the door, these words
Did plainly come to Peter's ears ;
And they such joyful tidings were,
The joy was more than he could bear !—
He melted into tears.

Sweet tears of hope and tenderness !
And fast they fell, a piteous shower !
His nerves, his sinews seemed to melt ;
Through all his iron frame was felt
A gentle, a relaxing, power !

Each fibre of his frame was weak ;
Weak all the animal within,
But, in its helplessness, grew mild
And gentle as an infant child,
An infant that has known no sin.

‘Tis said, meek Beast ! that, through
Heaven's grace.

He not unmoved did notice now
The cross upon thy shoulder scored,
For lasting impress, by the Lord
To whom all human-kind shall bow ;

Memorial of his touch—that day
When Jesus humbly deigned to ride,
Entering the proud Jerusalem,
By an immeasurable stream
Of shouting people deified !

Meanwhile the persevering Ass,
Turned towards a gate that hung in view
Across a shady lane : his chest
Against the yielding gate he pressed
And quietly passed through.

And up the stony lane he goes ;
No ghost more softly ever trod ;
Among the stones and pebbles, he,
Sets down his hoofs inaudibly,
As if with felt his hoofs were shod.

Along the laue the trusty Ass
Went twice two hundred yards or more,
And no one could have guessed his aim,—

Till to a lonely house he came
And stopped beside the door.

Thought Peter, 'tis the poor man's home !
He listens—not a sound is heard
Save from the trickling household rill
But, stepping o'er the cottage-sill,
Forthwith a little Girl appeared.

She to the Meeting-house was bound
In hopes some tidings there to gather
No glimpse it is, no doubtful gleam :
She saw—and uttered with a scream.
" My father ! here's my father ! "

The very word was plainly heard,
Heard plainly by the wretched Mother—
Her joy was like a deep affright :
And forth she rushed into the light,
And saw it was another !

And, instantly, upon the earth,
Beneath the full moon shining bright,
Close to the Ass's feet she fell :
At the same moment Peter Bell
Dismounts in most unhappy plight.

As he beheld the Woman lie
Breathless and motionless, the mind
Of Peter sadly was confused :
But, though to such demands unused,
And helpless almost as the blind,

He raised her up ; and, while he held
Her body propped against his knee,
The Woman waked—and when she spied
The poor Ass standing by her side,
She moaned most bitterly.

" Oh ! God be praised—my heart's at
ease—

For he is dead—I know it well ! "
—At this she wept a bitter flood ;
And, in the best way that he could,
His tale did Peter tell.

He trembles—he is pale as death :
His voice is weak with perturbation ;
He turns aside his head, he pauses :
Poor Peter from a thousand causes,
Is crippled sore in his narration.

At length she learned how he espied
The Ass in that small meadow-ground
And that her Husband now lay dead,
Beside that luckless river's bed
In which he had been drowned.

A piercing look the Widow cast
Upon the Beast that near her stands .
She sees 'tis he, that 'tis the same ;
She calls the poor Ass by his name,
And wrings, and wrings her hands.

" O wretched loss—untimely stroke !
If he had died upon his bed !
He knew not one forewarning pain ;
He never will come home again—
He's dead, for ever dead ! "

Beside the Woman Peter stands ;
His heart is opening more and more ;
A holy sense pervades his mind ;
He feels what he for human kind
Had never felt before.

At length, by Peter's arm sustained,
The Woman rises from the ground—
" Oh, mercy ! something must be done,
My little Rachel, you must run,—
Some willing neighbour must be found.

Make haste—my little Rachel—do,
The first you meet with—bid him come,
Ask him to lend his horse to-night,
And this good Man, whom Heaven
requite,
Will help to bring the body home."

Away goes Rachel weeping loud ;—
An infant, waked by her distress,
Makes in the house a piteous cry ;
And Peter hears the Mother sigh,
" Seven are they, and all fatherless ! "

And now is Peter taught to feel
That man's heart is a holy thing :
And Nature, through a world of death,
Breathes into him a second breath,
More searching than the breath of spring.

Upon a stone the Woman sits
In agony of silent grief—
From his own thoughts did Peter start ;
He longs to press her to his heart,
From love that cannot find relief.

But roused, as if through every limb
Had past a sudden shock of dread,
The Mother o'er the threshold flies,
And up the cottage stairs she hies,
And on the pillow lays her burning head.

And Peter turns his steps aside
Into a shade of darksome trees,
Where he sits down, he knows not how,
With his hands pressed against his brow,
His elbows on his tremulous knees.

There, self-involved, does Peter sit
Until no sign of life he makes,
As if his mind were sinking deep
Through years that have been long
asleep !

The trance is passed away—he wakes ;

He lifts his head—and sees the Ass
Yet standing in the clear moonshine ;
" Where shall I be as good as thou ?
Oh ! would, poor beast, that I had now
A heart but half as good as thine ! "

But *He*—who deviously hath sought
His Father through the lonesome woods,
Hath sought, proclaiming to the ear
Of night his grief and sorrowful fear—
He comes, escaped from fields and
floods ;—

With weary pace is drawing nigh ;
He sees the Ass—and nothing living
Had ever such a fit of joy
As ~~hush~~ this little orphan Boy,
For he has no misgiving !

Forth to the gentle Ass he springs,
And up about his neck he climbs ;
In loving words he talks to him,
He kisses, kisses face and limb, —
He kisses him a thousand times !

This Peter sees, while in the shade
He stood beside the cottage-door ;
And Peter Bell, the rufian wild,
Sobs loud, he sobs even like a child,
“ Oh ! God, I can endure no more ! ”

—Here ends my Tale : for in a trice
Arrived a neighbour with his horse ;
Peter went forth with him straightway ;
And, with due care, ere break of day,
Together they brought back the Corse.

And many years did this poor Ass,
Whom once it was my luck to see
Cropping the shrubs of Lennug-Laue,
Help by his labour to maintain
The Widow and her family.

And Peter Bell, who, till that night,
Had been the wildest of his clan,
Forsook his crimes, renounced his folly
And, after ten months' melancholy,
Became a good and honest man.

MISCELLANEOUS SONNETS

EDUCATION

TO—

HAPPY the feeling—on the bosom thrown
In perfect shape (whose beauty Time shall spare
Though a breath made it) like bubble blown
For summer pastime into waltz air,
Happy the thought less liked to a store
Of the sea-beach, when, polished with nice care,
Veins it discovers exquisite and rare,

Which for the loss of that moist gleam alone
That tempted first to gather it. That here,
O chief of Friends ! such feelings I present,
To thy regard, with thoughts so fortunate,
Were a vain notion ; but the hope is dear,
That thou, if not with partial joy elate, content !
Wilt smile upon this gift with more than mild

PART I

I

NUNS fret not at their convent's narrow
room :

And hermits are contented with their cells ;
And students with their pensive citadels ;
Maid at the wheel, the weaver at his
loom,

Sit blithe and happy ; bees that soar for
bloom,

High as the highest Peak of Furness-
fells, [bells :

Will murmur by the hour in foxglove
In truth the prison, unto which we doom
Ourselves, no prison is : and hence for
me, [bound

In sundry moods, 'twas pastime to be
Within the Sonnet's scanty plot of
ground :

Pleased if some Souls (for such there
needs must be)

Who have felt the weight of too much
liberty, [found.

Should find brief solace there, as I have

II

ADMONITION

Intended more particularly for the perusal of
those who may have happened to be en-
noured of some beautiful Place of Retreat,
in the Country of the Lakes.

WELL may'st thou halt—and gaze with
brightening eye !

The lovely Cottage in the guardian nook
Hath stirred thee deeply ; with its own
dear brook,

Its own small pasture, almost its own
sky !

But covet not the Abode :—forbear to
sigh,

As many do, repining while they look ;
Intruders—who would tear from Nature's
book

This precious leaf, with harsh impiety.
Think what the Home must be if it were
thine,

Even thine, though few thy wants !—
Roof, window, door,

The very flowers are sacred to the Poor,
The roses to the porch which they en-
twine :

Yea, all, that now enchants thee, from
the day

On which it should be touched, would
melt away.

III

“ BELOVED Vale ! ” I said, “ when I
shall con

Those many records of my childish
years,

Remembrance of myself and of my peers
Will press me down : to think of what is
gone

Will be an awful thought, if life have
one.”

But, when into the Vale I came, no fears
Distressed me : from mine eyes escaped
no tears ;

Deep thought, or dread remembrance,
had I none.

By doubts and thousand petty fancies
crost

I stood, of simple shame the blushing
Thrall :

So narrow seemed the brooks, the fields
so small !

A Juggler's balls old Time about him
tossed ;

I looked, I stared, I smiled, I laughed ;
and all

The weight of sadness was in wonder lost.

IV

AT APPLETHWAITE, NEAR KESWICK

1804

BEAUMONT ! it was thy wish that I should
rear

A seemly Cottage in this sunny Dell,
On favoured ground, thy gift, where I
might dwell

In neighbourhood with One to me most
dear.

That undivided we from year to year
Might work in our high Calling— a bright
hope

To which our fancies, mingling, gave
free scope

Till checked by some necessities severe.
And should these slacken, honoured

BEAUMONT ! still
Even then we may perhaps in vain
implore

Leave of our fate thy wishes to fulfil.
Whether this boon he granted us or not,

Old Skiddaw will look down upon the
Spot

With pride, the Muses love it evermore.

V

1801

PELION and Ossa flourish side by side,
Together in immortal books enrolled :

His ancient dower Olympus hath not
sold ;

And that inspiring Hill, which "did divide
Into two ample horns his forehead wide,"

Shines with poetic radiance as of old ;
While not an English Mountain we
behold

By the celestial Muses glorified.
Yet round our sea-girt shore they rise in
crowds :

What was the great Parnassus' self to
Thee,

Mount Skiddaw ? In his natural sover-
Our British Hill is nobler far ; he shrouds
His double front among Atlantic clouds,
And pours forth streams more sweet
than Castaly.

VI

THERE is a little unpretending Rill
Of limpid water, humbler far than aught
That ever among Men or Naiads sought
Notice or name !—It quivers down the
hill,

Furrowing its shallow way with dubious
will ;

Yet to my mind this scanty Stream is
brought

Often than Ganges or the Nile ; a
thought

Of private recollection sweet and still !
Months perish with their moons ; year

reads on year ;
But, faithful Emma ! thou with me
canst say

That, while ten thousand pleasures
disappear,

And ~~lose~~ their memory fast almost as
they ;

The immortal Spirit of one happy day
Lingers beside that Rill, in vision clear.

VII

HER only pilot, the soft breeze, the boat
Lingers, but Fancy is well satisfied ;

With keen-eyed Hope, with Memory,
at her side,

And the glad Muse at liberty to note
All that to each is precious, as we float

Gently along ; regardless who shall
chide

If the heavens smile, and leave us free to
glide.

Happy Associates breathing air remote
From trivial cares. But, Fancy and the
Muse,

Why have I crowded this small bark with
you

And others of your kind, ideal crew !
While here sits One whose brightness

owes its hues
To flesh and blood ; no Goddess ~~from~~
above,

No fleeting Spirit, but my own true
Love ?

VIII

THE fairest, brightest, hues of ether
fade ;

The sweetest notes must terminate and
die ;

O Friend ! thy flute has breathed a
harmony

Softly resounded through this rocky
glade ;

Such strains of rapture as the Genius
played

In his still haunt on Bagdad's summit
high ;

He who stood visible to Mirza's eye,
See the Vision of Mirza in the *Spectator*.

Never before to human sight betrayed.
Lo, in the vale, the mists of evening
spread !
The visionary Arches are not there,
Nor the green Islands, nor the shining
Seas ;
Yet sacred is to me this Mountain's head,
Whence I have risen, uplifted, on the
breeze
Of harmony above all earthly care.

IX

UPON THE SIGHT OF A BEAUTIFUL PICTURE
Painted by Sir G. H. Beaumont, Bart.
PRAISED be the Art whose subtle power
could stay
You cloud, and fix it in that glorious
shape ;
Nor would permit the thin smoke to
escape,
Nor those bright sunbeams to forsake the
day ;
Which stopped that band of travellers on
their way,
Ere they were lost within the shady
wood ;
And showed the Bark upon the glassy
flood
For ever anchored in her sheltering bay.
Soul-soothing Art ! whom Morning,
Noon-tide, Even,
Do serve with all their changeful page-
antry ;
Thou, with ambition modest yet sublime,
Here, for the sight of mortal man, hast
given
To one brief moment caught from
fleeting time
The appropriate calm of blest eternity.

X

"WHY, Minstrel, these untuneful mur-
muring—
Dull, flagging notes that with each other
jar ?"
"Think, gentle Lady, of a Harp so far
From its own country, and forgive the
strings."
A simple answer ! but even so forth
springs,
From the Castalian fountain of the heart,
The Poetry of Life, and all that Art
Divine of words quickening insensate
things.
From the submissive necks of guiltless
men
Stretched on the block, the glittering axe
recoils ;
Sun, moon, and stars, all struggle in the
Of mortal sympathy ; what wonder then
That the poor Harp distempered music
yields
To its sad Lord, far from his native

XI

AERIAL ROCK—whose solitary brow
From this low threshold daily meets my
sight ;
When I step forth to hail the morning
light ;
Or quit the stars with a lingering fare-
well—how
Shall Fancy pay to thee a grateful vow ?
How, with the Muse's aid, her love at-
test ?
—By planting on thy naked head the
crest
Of an imperial Castle, which the plough
Of ruin shall not touch. Innocent
scheme !
That doth presume no more than to
supply
A grace the sinuous vale and roaring
stream
Want, through neglect of hoar Antiquity.
Rise, then, ye votive Towers ! and catch
a gleam
Of golden sunset, ere it fade and die.

XII

TO SLEEP

O GENTLE SLEEP ! do they belong to thee,
These twinklings of oblivion ? Thou
dost love
To sit in meekness, like the brooding
Dove,
A captive never wishing to be free.
This tiresome night, O Sleep ! thou art to
me
A Fly, that up and down himself doth
shove
Upon a fretful rivulet, now above
Now on the water vexed with mockery.
I have no pain that calls for patience,
no ;
Hence am I cross and peevish as a child :
Am pleased by fits to have thee for my
foe,
Yet ever willing to be reconciled :
O gentle Creature ! do not use me so,
But once and deeply let me be beguiled.

XIII

TO SLEEP

FOND words have oft been spoken to thee,
Sleep !
And thou hast had thy store of tenderest
names ;
The very sweetest, Fancy culls or
frames,
When thankfulness of heart is strong
and deep !
Dear Boson-child we call thee, that dost
steep
In rich reward all suffering ; Balm that
targes

All anguish; Saint that evil thoughts and
 aims
 Takest away, and into souls dost creep,
 Like to a breeze from heaven. Shall I
 alone,
 I surely not a man ungently made,
 Call thee worst Tyrant by which Flesh
 is crost?
 Perverse, self-willed to own and to
 disown,
 Mere slave of them who never for thee
 prayed,
 Still last to come where thou art wanted
 most!

XIV

TO SLEEP

A FLOCK of sheep that leisurely pass by,
 One after one; the sound of rain, and
 bees
 Murmuring; the fall of rivers, winds and
 seas,
 Smooth fields, white sheets of water, and
 pure sky:
 I have thought of all by turns, and yet
 do lie
 Sleepless! and soon the small birds'
 melodies
 Must hear, first uttered from my orchard
 trees;
 And the first cuckoo's melancholy cry.
 Even thus last night, and two nights
 more, I lay,
 And could not win thee, Sleep! by any
 stealth:
 So do not let me wear to-night away:
 Without Thee what is all the morning's
 wealth?
 Come, blessed barrier between day and
 day,
 Dear mother of fresh thoughts and joyous
 health!

XV

THE WILD DUCK'S NEST

THE Imperial Consort of the Fairy-king
 Owns not a sylvan bower; or gorgeous
 cell
 With emerald floored, and with pur-
 pureal shell
 Ceilinged and roofed; that is so fair
 a thing
 As this low structure, for the tasks of
 Spring,
 Prepared by one who loves the buoyant
 swell
 Of the brisk waves, yet here consents to
 dwell;
 And spreads in steadfast peace her brood-
 ing wing.
 Words cannot paint the o'ershadowing
 yew-tree bough,

And dimly-gleaming Nest,—a hollow
 crown
 Of golden leaves inlaid with silver down,
 Fine as the mother's softest plumes
 allow:
 I gazed—and, self-accused while gazing,
 sighed
 For human-kind, weak slaves of curi-
 brous pride!

XVI

WRITTEN UPON A BLANK LEAF IN "THE
 COMPLETE ANGLER"

WHILE flowing rivers yield a blameless
 sport,
 Shall live the name of Walton: Sage
 benign!
 Whose pen, the mysteries of the rod and
 line
 Unfolding, did not fruitlessly exhort
 To reverend watching of each still
 report
 That Nature utters from her rural shrine.
 Meek, nobly versed, in simple discip-
 line—
 He found the longest summer day too
 short,
 To his loved pastime given by sedgy Lee,
 Or down the tempting maze of Shawford
 brook—
 Fairer than life itself, in this sweet Book,
 The cowslip-bank and shady willow-tree;
 And the fresh meads—where flowed,
 from every nook
 Of his full bosom, gladsome Piety!

XVII

TO THE POET, JOHN DYER

BARD of the Fleece, whose skilful genius
 made
 That work a living landscape fair and
 bright;
 Nor hallowed less with musical delight
 Than those soft scenes through which thy
 childhood strayed,
 Those southern tracts of Cambria, "deep
 embayed,
 With green hills fenced, with ocean's
 murmur lull'd;"
 Though hasty fame hath many a chaplet
 culled
 For worthless brows, while in the pensive
 shade
 Of cold neglect she leaves thy head
 ungraced,
 Yet pure and powerful minds, hearts
 meek and still, [Lay,
 A grateful few, shall love thy modest
 Long as the shepherd's bleating flock
 shall stray
 O'er naked Snowdon's wide aerial waste;
 Long as the thrush shall pipe on Grongar
 Hill!

XVIII

ON THE DETRACTION WHICH FOLLOWED
THE PUBLICATION OF A CERTAIN POEM

See Milton's Sonnet, beginning "A Book was
writ of late called 'Tetrachordon.'"

A Book came forth of late, called
PETER BELL;
Not negligent the style;—the matter?
—good.
As aught that song records of Robin
Hood;
Or Roy, renowned through many a
Scottish dell;
But some (who brook those hackneyed
themes full well,
Nor heat, at Tam o' Shanter's name,
their blood)
Waxed wroth, and with foul claws, a
harpie brood,
On Bard and Hero clamorously fell.
Heed not, wild Rover, once through
heath and glen,
Who mad'st at length the better life thy
choice,
Heed not such onset! Nay, if praise of
men
To thee appear not an unmeaning voice,
Lift up that grey-haired forehead, and
rejoice
In the just tribute of thy Poet's pen!

XIX

GRIEF, thou hast lost an ever ready friend
Now that the cottage Spinning-wheel
is mute;
And Care—a comforter that best could
suit
Her froward mood, and softliest repre-
hend;
And Love—a charmer's voice, that used
to lend,
More efficaciously than aught that flows
From harp or lute, kind influence to com-
pose
The throbbing pulse—else troubled
without end:
Even joy could tell, Joy craving truce
and rest
From her own overflow, what power
On those revolving motions did await
Assiduously—to soothe her aching breast:
And, to a point of just relief, abate
The mantling triumphs of a day too
blest.

XX

TO S. M.

Excuse is needless when with love
sincere
Of occupation, not by fashion led,
Thou turn'st the Wheel that slept with
dust o'erspread;

My nerves from no such murmur shrink,
—tho' near,
Soft as the Dorkhaw's to a distant ear,
When twilight shades darken the moun-
tain's head.

Even She who toils to spin our vital
thread
Might smile on work, O Lady, once so
dear
To household virtues. Venerable Art,
Torn from the Poor! yet shall kind
Heaven protect
Its own; though Rulers, with undue
respect,
Trusting to crowded factory and mart
And proud discoveries of the intellect,
Heed not the pillage of man's ancient
heart.

XXI

COMPOSED IN ONE OF THE VALLEYS OF
WESTMORELAND, ON EASTER SUNDAY

With each recurrence of this glorious
morn
That saw the Saviour in his human
frame
Rise from the dead, ercwhile the Cottage-
dame
Put on fresh raiment—till that hour
unworn:
Domestic hands the home-bred wool
had shorn,
And she who span it culled the daintiest
fleece,
In thoughtful reverence to the Prince of
Peace,
Whose temples bled beneath the platted
thorn.
A blest estate when piety sublime
These humble props disdained not! O
green dales!
Sad may I be who heard your sabbath
chime
When Art's abused inventions were un-
known;
Kind Nature's various wealth was all
your own;
And benefits were weighed in Reason's
scales!

XXII

DECAY OF PIETY

OfT have I seen, ere Time had ploughed
my cheek,
Matrons and Sires—who, punctual to the
call
Of their loved Church, on fast or festival
Through the long year the House of
Prayer would seek:
By Christmas snows, by visitation bleak
Of Easter winds, unscared, from hut or
hall
They came to lowly bench or sculptured
But with one fervour of devotion meek.

I see the places where they once were
known,
And ask, surrounded even by kneeling
crowds,
Is ancient Piety for ever flown ?
Alas ! even then they seemed like fleecy
clouds
That, struggling through the western sky,
have won
Their pensive light from a departed sun !

XXIII

COMPOSED ON THE EVE OF THE MARRIAGE
OF A FRIEND IN THE VALE OF GRAS-
MERE, 1812

WHAT need of clamorous bells, or ribands
gay, [grace ?
These humble nuptials to proclaim or
Angels of love, look down upon the place ;
Shed on the chosen vale a sun-bright
day !
Yet no proud gladness would the Bride
display
Even for such promise :—serious is her
face,
Modest her mien : and she, whose
thoughts keep pace
With gentleness, in that becoming way
Will thank you. Faultless does the
Maid appear ;
No disproportion in her soul, no strife :
But, when the closer view of wedded life
Hath shown that nothing human can be
clear
From frailty, for that insight may the
Wife
To her indulgent Lord become more dear.

XXIV

FROM THE ITALIAN OF MICHAEL ANGELO

I
YES ! hope may with my strong desire
keep pace,
And I be undeluded, unbetrayed :
For if our affections none finds false
In sight of Heaven, then, wherefore hath
God made
The world which we inhabit ? Better
plea
Love cannot have, than that in loving
thee
Glory to that eternal Peace is paid,
Who such divinity to thee imparts
As hallows and makes pure all gentle
hearts.
His hope is treacherous only whose love
dies
With beauty, which is varying every
hour ; [power
But, in chaste heart uninfluenced by the
Of outward change, there blooms a
deathless flower,
That breathes on earth the air of paradise.

XXV

FROM THE SAME

II

No mortal object did these eyes behold
When first they met the placid light of
thine,
And my Soul felt her destiny divine,
And hope of endless peace in me grew
bold :
Heaven-born, the Soul a heaven-ward
course must hold ;
Beyond the visible world she soars to
seek
(For what delight: the sense is false and
weak)
Ideal Form, the universal mould.
The wise man, I affirm, can find no rest
In that which perishes : nor will he lend
His heart to aught which doth on time
depend.
'Tis sense, unbridled will, and not true
love,
That kills the soul : love betters what is
best,
Ever here below, but more in heaven
above.

XXVI

FROM THE SAME. TO THE SUPREME
BEING

III

THE prayers I make will then be sweet
indeed
If Thou the spirit give by which I pray :
My unassisted heart is barren clay,
That of its native self can nothing feed :
Of good and pious works thou art the
seed,
That quickens only where thou say'st it
may :
Unless Thou shew to us thine own true
way
No man can find it : Father ! Thou must
lead.
Do Thou, then, breathe those thoughts
into my mind
By which such virtue may in me be
bred
That in thy holy footsteps, I may
tread ;
The fetters of my tongue do Thou unbind,
That I may have the power to sing of
thee,
And sound thy praises everlastingly.

XXVII

SURPRISED by joy—impatient as the
Wind
I turned to share the transport—Oh !
with whom
But Thee, deep buried in the silent tomb,
That spot which no vicissitude can find ?

Love, faithful love, recalled thee to my
mind—
But how could I forget thee? Through
what power,
Even for the least division of an hour.
Have I been so beguiled as to be blind
To my most grievous loss?—That
thought's return
Was the worst pang that sorrow ever
bore,
Save one, one only, when I stood forlorn,
Knowing my heart's best treasure was no
more;
That neither present time, nor years
unborn
Could to my sight that heavenly face
restore.

XXVIII

METHOUGHT I saw the footsteps of a
throne
Which mists and vapours from mine eyes
did shroud—
Nor view of who might sit thereon
allowed;
But all the steps and grounds about were
strewn
With sights the ruefullest that flesh and
bone
Ever put on; a miserable crowd.
Sick, hale, old, young, who cried before
that cloud,
"Thou art our king, O Death! to thee
we groan."
Those steps I climb: the mists before
me gave
Smooth way; and I beheld the face of
one
Sleeping alone within a mossy cave,
With her face up to heaven; that seemed
to have
Pleasing remembrance of a thought fore-
gone;
A lovely Beauty in a summer grave!

XXIX

NOVEMBER, 1836

II

EVEN so for me a Vision sanctified
The sway of Death; long ere mine eyes
had seen
Thy countenance—the still rapture of thy
mien—
When thou, dear Sister! wert become
Death's Bride:
No trace of pain or languor could abide
That change:—age on thy brow was
smoothed—thy cold
Wan cheek at once was privileged to
unfold
A loveliness to living youth denied.

W.P.

Oh! if within me hope should e'er decline,
The lamp of faith, lost Friend! too
faintly burn;
Then may that heaven-revealing smile of
thine,
The bright assurance, visibly return:
And let my spirit in that power divine
Rejoice, as, through that power, it ceased
to mourn.

XXX

It is a beauteous evening, calm and free,
The holy time is quiet as a Nun
Breathless with adoration; the broad
sun
Is sinking down in its tranquillity;
The gentleness of heaven broods o'er the
Sea:
Listen! the mighty Being is awake,
And doth with his eternal motion make
A sound like thunder—everlastingly.
Dear Child! dear Girl! that walkest
with me here,
If thou appear untouched by solemn
thought,
Thy nature is not therefore less divine:
Thou liest in Abraham's bosom all the
year;
And worship'st at the Temple's inner
shrine,
God being with thee when we know it not.

XXXI

WHERE lies the Land to which yon Ship
must go?
Fresh as a lark mounting at break of day,
Festively she puts forth in trim array;
Is she for tropic suns, or polar snow?
What boots the inquiry?—Neither friend
nor foe
She cares for; let her travel where she
may,
She finds familiar names, a beaten way
Ever before her, and a wind to blow.
Yet still I ask, what haven is her mark?
And, almost as it was when ships were
rare,
(From time to time, like Pilgrims, here
and there
Crossing the waters) doubt, and some-
thing dark,
Of the old Sea some reverential fear,
Is with me at thy farewell, joyous Bark!

XXXII

WITH Ships the sea was sprinkled far
and nigh,
Like stars in heaven, and joyously it
showed:
Some lying fast at anchor in the road.
Some veering up and down, one knew
not why.
A goodly Vessel did I then espy
Come like a giant from a haven broad;

P.

And lustily along the Bay she strode,
Her tackling rich, and of apparel high.
This Ship was nought to me, nor I to her,
Yet I pursued her with a Lover's look;
This Ship to all the rest did I prefer:
When will she turn, and whither? She
will brook
No tarrying; where She comes the
winds must stir:
On went She, and due north her journey
took.

XXXIII

THE world is too much with us; late
and soon,
Getting and spending, we lay waste
our powers:
Little we see in Nature that is ours:
We have given our hearts away, a
sordid boon!
This Sea that bares her bosom to the
moon;
The winds that will be howling at all
hours,
And are up-gathered now like sleeping
flowers;
For this, for everything, we are out of
tune:
It moves us not.—Great God! I'd rather
be
A Pagan suckled in a creed outworn;
So might I, standing on this pleasant lea,
Have glimpses that would make me
less forlorn:
Have sight of Proteus rising from the
sea;
Or hear old Triton blow his wreathed
horn.)

XXXIV

A VOLANT Tribe of Bards on earth are
found,
Who, while the flattering Zephyrs found
them play,
On "coigns of vantage" hang their
nests of clay;
How quickly from that airy hold
unbound,
Dust for oblivion! To the solid ground
Of nature trusts the Mind that builds
for aye;
Convinced that there, there only, she
can lay
Secure foundations. As the year runs
round,
Apart she toils within the chosen ring;
While the stars shine, or while day's
purple eye
Is gently closing with the flowers of
spring:
Where even the motion of an Angel's
wing
Would interrupt the intense tranquillity
Of silent hills, and more than silent sky.

XXXV

"WEAK is the will of Man, his judg-
ment blind;
"Remembrance persecutes, and Hope
betrays;
"Heavy is woe;—and joy, for human-
kind,
"A mournful thing, so transient is the
blaze!"
Thus might he paint our lot of mortal
days
Who wants the glorious faculty assigned
To elevate the more-than-reasoning
Mind,
And colour life's dark cloud with orient
rays.
Imagination is that sacred power,
Imagination lofty and refined:
'Tis hers to pluck the amaranthine
flower
Of Faith, and round the Sufferer's tem-
ples bind
Wreaths that endure affliction's heaviest
shower,
And do not shrink from sorrow's keenest
wind."

XXXVI

TO THE MEMORY OF RAISLEY CALVERT
CALVERT! it must not be unheard by
them
Who may respect my name, that I to
thee
Owed many years of early liberty.
This care was thine when sickness did
condemn
Thy youth to hopeless wasting, root
and stem—
That I, if frugal and severe, might stray
Where'er I liked; and finally array
My temples with the Muse's diadem.
Hence, if in freedom I have loved the
truth;
If there be aught of pure, or good, or
great,
In my past verse; or shall be, in the lays
Of higher mood, which now I meditate;—
It gladdens me, O worthy, short-lived,
Youth!
To think how much of this will be thy
praise.

PART II

I

SCORN not the Sonnet; Critic, you have
frowned,
Mindless of its just honours; with this
key
Shakspeare unlocked his heart, the
melody
Of this small lute gave ease to Petrarch's
wound;
A thousand times this pipe did Tasso

With it Camdens soothed an exile's
grief;
The Sonnet glittered a gay myrtle leaf
Amid the cypress with which Dante
crowned
His visionary brow: a glow-worm lamp,
It cheered mild Spenser, called from
Faery-land
To struggle through dark ways; and,
when a damp
Fell round the path of Milton, in his hand
The Thing became a trumpet; whence he
blew
Soul-animating strains—alas, too few!

II

How sweet it is, when mother Faucy
rocks
The wayward brain, to saunter through
a wood!
An old place, full of many a lovely
brook,
Tall trees, green arbour, and ground-
flowers in flocks;
And wild rose tap-toe upon hawthorn
stocks.
Like a bold Girl, who plays her agile
pranks
At Wakes and Fairs with wandering
Mountebanks,—
When she stands cresting the Clown's
head, and mocks
The crowd beneath her. Verily I
think,
Such place to me is sometimes like a
dream
Or map of the whole world: thoughts,
link by link,
Enter through ears and eyesight, with
such gleam
Of all things, that at last in fear I shrink.
And leap at once from the delicious
stream.

III

TO B. R. HAYDON

High is our calling, Friend!—Creative
Art
(Whether the instrument of words she
use,
Or pencil pregnant with ethereal hues)
Demands the service of a mind and heart.
Though sensitive, yet, in their weakest
part,
Heroically fashioned—to infuse
Faith in the whispers of the lonely
Muse,
While the whole world seems adverse
to desert.
And, oh! when Nature sinks, as oft she
may,
Through long-lived pressure of obscure
distress,

Still to be strenuous for the bright
reward,
And in the soul admit of no decay,
Brook no continuance of weak-minded-
ness—
Great is the glory, for the strife is hard!

IV

From the dark chambers of dejection
freed,
Spurning the unprofitable yoke of care,
Rise, GILLIES, rise: the gales of youth
shall bear
Thy genius forward like a winged steed.
Though bold Bellerophon (so Jove
decreed
In wrath) fell headlong from the fields
of air,
Yet a rich guerdon waits on minds that
dare,
If aught be in them of immortal seed,
And reason govern that audacious flight
Which heaven-ward they direct.—Then
droop not thou,
Erroneously renewing a sad vow
In the low dell 'mid Roslin's faded
grove:
A cheerful life is what the Muses love,
A soaring spirit is their prime delight.

V

FAIR Prime of life! were it enough to
gild
With ready sunbeams every straggling
shower;
And, if an unexpected cloud should
lower,
Swiftly thereon a rainbow arch to
build
For Fancy's errands,—then, from fields
half-tilled
Gathering green weeds, to mix with
poppv flower,
Thee might thy Minions crown, and
chant thy power,
Unpitied by the wise, all censure stilled.
Ah! show that worthier honours are
thy due:
Fair Prime of life! arouse the deeper
heart:
Confirm the Spirit glorying to pursue
Some path of steep ascent and lofty aim:
And, if there be a joy that slights the
claim
Of grateful memory, bid that joy depart.

VI

I WATCH, and long have watched, with
calm regret
Yon slowly-sinking star—immortal Sirs
(So might he seem) of all the glittering
quire!
Blue ether still surrounds him—yet—
and yet;

But now the horizon's rocky parapet
Is reached, where, forfeiting his bright
attire,
He burns—transmuted to a dusky fire—
Then pays submissively the appointed
debt
To the flying moments, and is seen no
more.
Angels and gods! We struggle with
our fate,
While health, power, glory, from their
height decline,
Depressed; and then extinguished: and
our state,
In this, how different, lost Star, from
thine,
That no to-morrow shall our beams
restore!

VII

I HEARD (alas! 't was only in a dream)
Strains—which, as sage Antiquity be-
lieved,
By waking ears have sometimes been
received [stream;
Wafted adown the wind from lake or
A most melodious requiem, a supreme
And perfect harmony of notes, achieved
By a fair Swan on drowsy billows heaved,
O'er which her pinions shed a silver
gleam.
For is she not the votary of Apollo?
And knows she not, singing as he inspires,
That bliss awaits her which the ungenial
Hollow
Of the dull earth partakes not, nor
desires?
Mount, tuneful Bird, and join the im-
mortal quires!
She soared—and I awoke, struggling
in vain to follow.

VIII

RETIREMENT

Is the whole weight of what we think
and feel,
Save only far as thought and feeling
blend
With action, were as nothing, patriot
Friend!
From thy remonstrance would be no
appeal;
But to promote and fortify the weal
Of our own Being is her paramount end:
A truth which they alone shall compre-
hend
Who shun the mischief which they
cannot heal. [bliss:
Peace in these feverish times is sovereign
Here, with no thirst but what the stream
can slake,
And startled only by the rustling brake,
1 See the Phædon of Plato, by which this
Sonnet was suggested.

Cool air I breathe; while the unincum-
bered Mind
By some weak aims at services assigned
To gentle Natures, thanks not Heaven
amiss.

IX

Nor Love, nor War, nor the tumultuous
swell
Of civil conflict, nor the wrecks of
change,
Nor Duty struggling with afflictions
strange—
Not these *alone* inspire the tuneful shell;
But where untrobbled peace and concord
dwell,
There also is the Muse not loth to range,
Watching the twilight smoke of cot
or, grange,
Skyward ascending from a woody dell.
Meek inspirations please her, lone endea-
vour,
And sage content, and placid melancholy;
She loves to gaze upon a crystal river—
Diaphanous because it travels slowly;
Soft is the music that would charm for
ever;
The flower of sweetest smell is shy and
lowly.

X

MARK the concentrated hazels that enclose
You old grey Stone, protected from
the ray
Of noon-tide suns:—and even the
beams that play
And glance, while wantonly the rough
wind blows, [grows
Are seldom free to touch the moss that
Upon that roof, amid embowering gloom,
The very image framing of a Tomb,
In which some ancient Chieftain finds
repose
Among the lonely mountains.—Live, ye
trees!
And thou, grey Stone, the passive
likeness keep
Of a dark chamber where the Mighty
sleep: [bends
For more than Fancy to the influence
When solitary Nature condescends
To mimic Time's forlorn humanities.

XI

COMPOSED AFTER A JOURNEY ACROSS
THE HAMBLETON HILLS, YORKSHIRE
DARK and more dark the shades of
evening fell;
The wished-for point was reached—but
at an hour
When little could be gained from that
rich dower
Of prospect, where many thousands
tell.

What did the glowing west with marvellous
power
Salute us; there stood Indian citadel,
Temple of Greece, and minster with its
tower
Substantially expressed—a place for bell
Or clock to toll from! Many a tempting
isle,
With groves that never were imagined,
lay
'Mid seas how steadfast! objects all for
the eye
Of silent rapture; but we felt the while
We should forget them; they are of
the sky,
And from our earthly memory fade
away.

XII

—“they are of the sky,
And from our earthly memory fade away.”

Those words were uttered as in pensive
mood
We turned, departing from that solemn
sight:
A contrast and reproach to gross delight,
And life's unspiritual pleasures daily
wooded!
But now upon this thought I cannot
brook:
It is unstable as a dream of night;
Nor will I praise a cloud, however bright,
Disparaging Man's gifts, and proper
food,
Grove, isle, with every shape of sky-built
dome,
Though clad in colours beautiful and
pure,
Find in the heart of man no natural
home:
The immortal Mind craves objects that
endure:
These cleave to it; from these it cannot
roam,
Not they from it: their fellowship is
secure.

XIII

SEPTEMBER, 1815

While not a leaf seems faded; while
the fields,
With ripening harvest prodigally fair,
In brightest sunshine bask; this nipping
air,
Sent from some distant clime, where
Winter wilds
His icy scimitar, a foretaste yields
Of bitter change, and bids the flowers
beware;
And whispers to the silent birds, “Pre-
pare
Against the threatening foe your
trustiest shields.”

For me, who under kindlier laws belong
To Nature's tuneful quire, this rustling
dry
Through leaves yet green, and yon
crystalline sky,
Announce a season potent to renew,
Mid frost and snow, the instinctive joys
of song,
And nobler cares than listless summer
knew.

XIV

NOVEMBER I

How clear, how keen, how marvellously
bright
The effluence from yon distant moun-
tain's head,
Which, strewn with snow smooth as
the sky can shed,
Shines like another sun—on mortal
sight
Uprisen, as if to check approaching
Night,
And all her twinkling stars. Who now
would tread,
If so he might, yon mountain's glittering
head—
Terrestrial, but a surface, by the flight
Of sad mortality's earth-sullying wing,
Unswep, unstained? Nor shall the
aerial Powers
Dissolve that beauty, destined to endure.
White, radiant, spotless, exquisitely
pure,
Through all vicissitudes, till genial
Spring
Has filled the laughing vales with wel-
come flowers.

XV

COMPOSED DURING A STORM

One who was suffering tumult in his soul
Yet failed to seek the sure relief of
prayer,
Went forth—his course surrendering
to the care,
Of the fierce wind, while mid-day light-
nings prowled
Insidiously, untimely thunders growl;
While trees, dim-seen, in frenzied num-
bers, tear
The lingering remnant of their yellow hair,
And shivering wolves, surprised with
darkness, howl
As if the sun were not. He raised his eye—
Soul-smitten; for, that instant, did
appear
Large space (mid dreadful clouds) of
purest sky,
An azure cisc—shield of Tranquillity:
Invisible, unlooked for, minister
Of providential goodness ever nigh!

XVI

TO A SNOW-DROP

LONE Flower, hemmed in with snows
and white as they
But hardier far, once more I see thee
bend
Thy forehead, as if fearful to offend,
Like an unbidden guest. Though day
by day,
Storms, sallying from the mountain-tops,
way-lay
The rising sun, and on the plains descend;
Yet art thou welcome, welcome as a
friend
Whose zeal outruns his promise! Blue-
eyed May
Shall soon behold this border thickly set
With bright jonquils, their odours lavish-
ing
On the soft west-wind and his frolic
peers:
Nor will I then thy modest grace forget,
Chaste Snow-drop, venturous harbinger
of Spring,
And pensive monitor of fleeting years!

XVII

TO THE LADY MARY LOWTHER

With a selection from the Poems of Anne,
Countess of Winchilsea; and extracts of
similar character from other Writers; trans-
cribed by a female friend.

LADY! I rifled a Parnassian Cave
(But seldom trod) of mildly-gleaming ore;
And culled, from sundry beds, a lucid
store
Of genuine crystals, pure as those that
pave
The azure brooks, where Dian joys to lave
Her spotless limbs; and ventured to
explore
Dim shades—for reliques, upon L-the's
shore,
Cast up at random by the sullen wave.
To female hands the treasures were
resigned;
And lo this Work!—a grotto bright and
clear
From stain or taint; in which thy
blameless mind
May feed on thoughts though pensive
not austere;
Or, if thy deeper spirit be inclined
To holy musing, it may enter here.

XVIII

TO LADY BEAUMONT

LADY! the songs of Spring were in
the grove
While I was shaping beds for winter
flowers;

While I was planting green unfading
bowers,
And shrubs—to hang upon the warm
alcove,
And sheltering wall; and still, as Fancy
wove
The dream, to time and nature's blended
powers
I gave, this paradise for winter hours,
A labyrinth, Lady! which your feet
shall rove.
Yes! when the sun of life more softly
shines,
Becoming thoughts, I trust, of solemn
gloom
Or of high gladness you shall hither
bring;
And these perennial bowers and murmur-
ing pines
Be gracious as the music and the bloom
And as the mighty ravishment of spring.

XIX

*There is a pleasure in poetic pains
Which only Poets know;—'t was rightly
said;*

Whom could the Muses else allude to read
Their smoothest paths, to wear their
lightest chains?
Where happiest Faëry has inspired the
strains,
How oft the malice of one luckless word
Pursues the enthusiast to the social
board,
Haunts him belated on the silent plains!
Yet he repines not, if his thoughtstand
clear,
At last, of hindrance and obscurity,
Fresh as the star that crowns the
brow of morn;
Bright, speckless, as a softly-moulded
tear
The moment it has left the virgin's eye,
Or rain-drop lingering on the pointed
thorn.

XX

THE Shepherd, looking eastward, softly
said,

"Bright is thy veil, O Moon, as thou
art bright!"

Forthwith, that little cloud, in ether
spread

And penetrated all with tender light,
She cast away, and showed her fulgent
head

Uncovered; dazzling the Beholder's
sight

As if to vindicate her beauty's right,
Her beauty thoughtlessly disparaged.

Meanwhile that veil, removed or thrown
aside,

Went floating from her, darkening as it

And a huge mass, to bury or to hide,
Approached this glory of the firmament;
Who meekly yields, and is obscured—
content
With one calm triumph of a modest
pride.

XXI

WHEN haughty expectations prostrate
lie,
And grandeur crouches like a guilty
thing,
Oft shall the lowly weak, till nature bring
Mature release, in fair society
Survive, and Fortune's utmost anger
try;
Like these frail snow-drops that together
cling,
And nod their helmets, smitten by the
wing
Of many a furious whirl-blast sweeping
by.
Observe the faithful flowers! if small
to great
May lead the thoughts, thus struggling
used to stand
The Emathian phalanx, doubly obstinate:
And so the bright immortal Theban
band,
Whom onset, fiercely urged at Jove's
command,
Might overwhelm, but could not separate!

XXII

HAIL, Twilight, sovereign of one peaceful
hour!
Not dull art Thou as undiscerning
Night;
But studious only to remove from sight
Day's mutable distinctions.—Ancient
Power!
Thus did the waters gleam, the moun-
tains lower,
To the rude Briton, when, in wolf-skin
vest
Here roving wild, he laid him down
to rest
On the bare rock, or through a leafy
bower
Looked ere his eyes were closed. By
him was seen
The self-same Vision which we now
behold,
At thy meek bidding, shadowy Powers
brought forth;
These mighty barriers, and the gulf
between;
The flood, the stars,—a spectacle as old
As the beginning of the heavens and
earth!

XXIII

WITH how sad steps, O Moon, thou
climb'st the sky,

"How silently, and with how wan a
face!"
Where art thou? Thou so often seen
on high
Running among the clouds a Wood-
nymph's race!
Unhappy Nuns, whose common breath's
a sigh
Which they would stifle, move at such
a pace!
The northern Wind, to call thee to the
[chase,
Must blow to-night his bugle horn.
Had I
The power of Merlin, Goddess! this
should be:
And all the stars, fast as the clouds
were riven,
Should sally forth, to keep thee company,
Hurrying and sparkling through the
clear blue heaven;
But, Cynthia! should to thee the palm
be given,
Queen both for beauty and for majesty.

XXIV

EVER as a dragon's eye that feels the
stress
Of a bedrugging sleep, or as a lamp
Suddenly glaring through sepulchral
damp,
So burns yon Taper 'mid a black recess
Of mountains, silent, dreary, motionless:
The lake below reflects it not; the sky
Muffled in clouds, affords no company
To mitigate and cheer its loneliness.
Yet, round the body of that joyless
Thing
Which sends so far its melancholy light,
Perhaps are seated in domestic ring
A gay society with faces bright,
Conversing, reading, laughing;—or they
sing, [unite.
While hearts and voices in the song

XXV

THE stars are mansions built by Nature's
hand,
And, haply, there the spirits of the blest
Dwell, clothed in radiance, their immor-
tal vest;
Huge Ocean shows, within his yellow
strand,
A habitation marvellously planned,
For life to occupy in love and rest;
All that we see—is dome, or vault, or
nest.
Or fortress, reared at Nature's sage
command.
Glad thought for every season! but
the Spring
Gave it while cares were weighing on
my heart,
'Mid song of birds, and insects murmur-
ing;

And while the youthful year's prolific
art—
Of bud, leaf, blade, and flower—was
fashioning
Abodes where self-disturbance hath no
part.

XXVI

RESPONDING Father! mark this altered
bough,
So beautiful of late, with sunshiny
warmed,
Or moist with dews; what more un-
sightly now,
Its blossoms shrivelled, and its fruit,
if formed,
Invisible? yet Spring her genial brow
Knits not o'er that discolouring and
decay
As false to expectation. Nor fret thou
At like unlovely process in the May
Of human life: a Stripling's graces
blow,
Fade and are shed, that from their
timely fall
(Misdeem it not a cankerous change)
may grow
Rich mellow bearings, that for thanks
shall call:
In all men, sinful is it to be slow
To hope—in Parents, sinful above all.

XXVII

CAPTIVITY.—MARY QUEEN OF SCOTS

"As the cold aspect of a sunless way
Strikes through the Traveller's frame
with deadlier chill,
Oft as appears a grove, or obvious hill,
Glistening with unparticipated ray,
Or shining slope where he must never
stray;
So joys, remembered without wish, or
will,
Sharpen the keenest edge of present
ill,—
On the crushed heart a heavier burthen
lay.
Just Heaven, contract the compass of
my mind
To fit proportion with my altered state!
Quench those felicities whose light I find
Reflected in my bosom all too late!—
O be my spirit, like my thralldom, strait;
And, like mine eyes that stream with
sorrow, blind!"

XXVIII

ST. CATHERINE OF LEDBURY

WHEN human touch (as monkish books
attest)
Nor was applied nor could be, Ledbury
bells

Broke forth in concert flung adown the
dells,
And upward, high as Malvern's cloudy
crest;
Sweet tones, and caught by a noble
Lady blest
To rapture! Mabel listened at the side
Of her loved mistress: soon the music
died,
And Catherine said, *Woe! I set up my rest.*
Warned in a dream, the Wanderer long
had sought
A home that by such miracle of sound
Must be revealed:—she heard it now,
or felt
The deep, deep joy of a confiding thought;
And there, a saintly anchoress, she
dwelt
Till she exchanged for heaven that happy
ground.

XXIX

—"gives to airy nothing
A local habitation and a name."

THOUGH narrow be that old Man's
cares, and near,
The poor old Man is greater than he
seems:
For he hath waking empire, wide as
dreams;
An ample sovereignty of eye and ear.
Rich are his walks with supernatural
cheer;
The region of his inner spirit teems
With vital sounds and monitory gleams
Of high astonishment and pleasing fear.
He the seven birds hath seen, that
never part,
Seen the SEVEN WHISTLERS in their
nightly rounds,
And counted them: and oftentimes
will start—
For overhead are sweeping GABRIEL'S
HOUNDS
Doomed, with their impious Lord, the
flying Hart
To chase for ever, on aerial grounds!

XXX

FOUR fiery steeds impatient of the rein
Whirled us o'er sunless ground beneath
a sky
As void of sunshine, when, from that
wide plain,
Clear tops of far-off mountains we descried,
Like a Sierra of cerulean Spain,
All light and lustre. Did no heart reply?
Yes, there was One;—for One, asunder fly
The thousand links of that ethereal
chain:
And green vales open out, with grove
and field, [Home;
And the fair front of many a happy

Such tempting spots as into vision come
While Soldiers, weary of the arms they
wield
And sick at heart of strife-fur Christen-
dom,
Gaze on the moon by parting clouds
revealed.

XXXI

BROOK ! whose society the Poet seeks,
Intent his wasted spirits to renew ;
And whom the curious Painter doth
pursue
Through rocky passes, among flowery
creeks,
And tracks thee dancing down thy
water-breaks ;
If wish were mine some type of thee to
view,
Thee, and not thee thyself, I would not
do
Like Grecian Artists, give thee human
cheeks,
Channels for tears ; no Naiad should'st
thou be,—
Have neither limbs, feet, feathers,
joints nor hairs :
It seems the Eternal Soul is clothed in
thee
With purer robes than those of flesh
and blood,
And hath bestowed on thee a safer good ;
Unwearied joy, and life without its
cares.

XXXII

COMPOSED ON THE BANKS OF A ROCKY
STREAM
DOGMATIC Teachers, of the snow-white
fur !
Ye wrangling Schoolmen, of the scarlet
hood !
Who, with a keenness not to be with-
stood,
Press the point home, or falter and demur,
Checked in your course by many a teasing
burr ;
These natural council-seats your acrid
blood
Might cool ;—and, as the Genius of the
flood
Stoops willingly to animate and spur
Each lighter function slumbering in
the brain.
Yon eddying balls of foam, these arrowy
gleams
That o'er the pavement of the surging
streams
Welter and flash, a synod might detain
With subtle speculations, haply vain,
But surely less so than your far-fetched
themes !

XXXIII

THIS, AND THE TWO FOLLOWING, WERE
SUGGESTED BY MR. W. WESTALL'S
VIEWS OF THE CAVEs, ETC., IN YORK-
SHIRE

PURE element of waters ! wheresoe'er
Thou dost forsake thy subterranean
haunts,
Green herbs, bright flowers, and betry-
bearing plants,
Rise into life and in thy train appear :
And, through the sunny portion of the
year, [vants :
Swift insects shine, thy hovering pursui-
And, if thy bounty fail, the forest pants ;
And hart and hind and hunter with his
spear,
Languish and droop together. Nor
unfelt [nign ;
In man's perturbed soul thy sway be-
And, haply, far within the marble belt
Of central earth, where tortured Spirits
pine
For grace and goodness lost, thy mur-
murs melt
Their anguish,—and they blend sweet
songs with thine.

XXXIV

MALHAM COVE

Was the aim frustrated by force or guile,
When giants scooped from out the
rocky ground,
Tier under tier, this semicirque profound ?
(Giants—the same who built in Erin's
isle
That Causeway with incomparable
toil !)— [wound
O, had this vast theatric structure
With finished sweep into a perfect round,
No mightier work had gained the plau-
sive smile
Of all-beholding Phœbus ! But, alas,
Vain earth ! false world ! Foundations
must be laid
In Heaven ; for, 'mid the wreck of is
and was, [trayed
Things incomplete and purposes be-
Make sadder transits o'er thought's
optic glass
Than noblest objects utterly decayed.

XXXV

GORDALE

At early dawn, or rather when the air
Glimmers with fading light, and shadowy
Eve
Is busiest to confer and to bereave ;

1 Waters (as Mr. Westall informs us in the
letter-press prefixed to his admirable views)
are invariably found to flow through these
caverns.

Then, pensive Votary! let thy feet
 repair
 To Gordale-chasm, terrific as the lair
 Where the young lions couch: for so,
 by leave
 Of the propitious hour, thou may'st
 perceive
 The local Deity, with oozy hair
 And mineral crown, beside his jagged
 urn,
 Recumbent: Him thou may'st behold,
 who hides
 His lineaments by day, yet there pre-
 sides,
 Teaching the docile waters how to turn,
 Or (if need be) impediment to spurn,
 And force their passage to the salt-sea
 tides!

XXXVI

COMPOSED UPON WESTMINSTER BRIDGE,
 SEPT. 3, 1802

EARTH has not any thing to show more
 fair:
 Dull would he be of soul who could pass
 by
 A sight so touching in its majesty:
 This City now doth, like a garment,
 wear
 The beauty of the morning: silent,
 bare,
 Ships, towers, domes, theatres, and
 temples lie
 Open unto the fields, and to the sky;
 All bright and glittering in the smokeless
 air.
 Never did sun more beautifully steep
 In his first splendour, valley, rock, or
 hill:
 Ne'er saw I, never felt, a calm so deep!
 The river glideth at his own sweet will:
 Dear God! the very houses seem asleep;
 And all that mighty heart is lying still!

XXXVII

CONCLUSION

TO —

If these brief Records, by the Muses' art
 Produced as lonely Nature or the strife
 That animates the scenes of public life,¹
 Inspired, may in thy leisure claim a
 part;
 And if these Transcripts of the private
 Have gained a sanction from thy
 falling tears:
 Then I repent not. But my soul hath
 fears
 Breathed from eternity; for as a dart
 Cleaves the blank air, Life flies: now
 every day
 Is but a glimmering spoke in the swift
 wheel

¹ This line alludes to Sonnets which will be found in another Class.

Of the revolving week. Away, away,
 All fitful cares, all transitory zeal!
 So timely Grace the immortal wing
 may heal,
 And honour rest upon the senseless clay.

PART III

I

Though the bold wings of Poesy affect
 The clouds, and wheel around the moun-
 tain tops
 Rejoicing, from her loftiest height she
 drops
 Well pleased to skim the plain with
 wild flowers deckt,
 Or muse in solemn grove whose shades
 protect
 The lingering dew—there steals along,
 or stops
 Watching the least small bird that
 round her hops,
 Or creeping worm, with sensitive respect.
 Her functions are they therefore less
 divine,
 Her thoughts less deep, or void of
 grave intent
 Her simplest fancies? Should that
 fear be thine,
 Aspiring Votary, ere thy hand present
 One offering, kneel before her modest
 shrine,
 With brow in penitential sorrow bent!

II

OXFORD, MAY 30, 1820

Ye sacred Nurseries of blooming Youth!
 In whose collegiate shelter England's
 Flowers
 Expand, enjoying through their vernal
 hours
 The air of liberty, the light of truth:
 Much have ye suffered from Time's
 gnawing tooth:
 Yet, O ye spires of Oxford! domes and
 towers!
 Gardens and groves! your presence over-
 powers
 The soberness of reason; till, in sooth,
 Transformed, and rushing on a bold
 exchange,
 I slight my own beloved Cam, to range
 Where silver Isis leads my stripling feet;
 Pace the long avenue, or glide adown
 The stream-like windings of that glorious
 street—
 An eager Novice robed in fluttering gown;

III

OXFORD, MAY 30, 1820

SHAME on this faithless heart! 'that
 could allow
 Such transport, though but for a mo-
 ment's space;

Not while—to aid the spirit of the
place—
The crescent moon clove with its glittering prow
The clouds, or night-bird sang from
shady bough;
But in plain daylight:—She, too, at
my side,
Who, with her heart's experience satisfied,
Maintains inviolate its slightest vow!
Sweet Fancy! other gifts must I receive;
Proofs of a higher sovereignty I claim;
Take from *her* brow the withering
flowers of eve,
And to that brow life's morning wreath
restore:
Let *her* be comprehended in the frame
Of these illusions, or they please no
more.

IV

RECOLLECTION OF THE PORTRAIT OF
KING HENRY EIGHTH, TRINITY LODGE,
CAMBRIDGE

THE imperial Stature, the colossal stride,
Are yet before me; yet do I behold
The broad full visage, chest of amplest
mould,
The vestments brodered with barbaric
pride:
And lo! a poniard, at the Monarch's
side,
Hangs ready to be grasped in sympathy
With the keen threatenings of that
fulgent eve,
Below the white-rimmed bonnet, far-
descried.
Who trembles now at thy capricious
mood?
'Mid those surrounding Worthies, haugh-
ty King,
We rather think, with grateful mind
sedate,
How Providence educeth, from the
spring
Of lawless will, unlooked-for streams
of good,
Which neither force shall check nor
time abate!

V

ON THE DEATH OF HIS MAJESTY (GEORGE
THE THIRD)

WARD of the LAW!—dread Shadow of a
King!
Whose realm had dwindled to one
stately room;
Whose universe was gloom immersed
in gloom,
Darkness as thick as life o'er life could
Save haply for some feeble glimmering
Of Faith and Hope—if thou, by nature's
doom,

Gently hast sunk into the quiet tomb,
Why should we bend in grief, to sorrow
cling,
When thankfulness were best?—Fresh-
flowing tears,
Or, where tears flow not, sigh succeeding
sigh,
Yield to such after-thought the sole
reply
Which justly it can claim. The Nation
hears
In this deep knell, silent for threescore
years,
An unexampled voice of awful memory!

VI

*JUNE, 1820

FAME tells of groves—from England
far away—
Groves that inspire the Nightingale to
trill
And modulate, with subtle reach of skill
Elsewhere unmatched, her ever-varying
lay:
Such bold report I venture to gainsay:
For I have heard the quire of Richmond
hill
Chanting, with indefatigable bill,
Strains that recalled to mind a distant
day;
When, haply under shade of that same
wood,
And scarcely conscious of the dashing
oars
Plied steadily between those willowy
shores,
The sweet-souled Poet of the Seasons
stood—
Listening, and listening long, in raptu-
rous mood,
Ye heavenly Birds! to your Progenitors.

VII

*A PARSONAGE IN OXFORDSHIRE

WHERE holy ground begins, unhallowed
ends,
Is marked by no distinguishable line;
The turf unites, the pathways inter-
twine;
And, wheresoe'er the stealing footstep
tends,
Garden, and that Domain where kindred,
friends,
And neighbours rest together, here
confound
Their several features, mingled like
the sound
Of many waters, or as evening blends
With shady night. Soft airs, from
shrub and flower,
Waft fragrant greetings to each silent
grave;

¹ Wallachia is the country alluded to.

And while those lofty poplars gently
wave,
Their tops, between them comes and
goes a sky
Bright as the glimpses of eternity,
To saints accorded in their mortal hour.

VIII

COMPOSED AMONG THE RUINS OF A CASTLE
IN NORTH WALES

THROUGH shattered galleries, 'mid roof-
less halls,
Wandering with timid footsteps oft
betrayed,
The Stranger sighs, nor scruples to
upbraid
Old Time, though he, gentlest among
the Thralls
Of Destiny, upon these wounds hath
laid
His lenient touches, soft as light that
falls,
From the wan Moon, upon the towers
and walls,
Light deepening the profoundest sleep
of shade.
Relic of Kings! Wreck of forgotten
wars,
To winds abandoned and the prying
stars,
Time loves Thee! at his call the Seasons
twine
Luxuriant wreaths around thy fore-
head hoar:
And, though past pomp no changes
can restore,
A soothing recompence, his gift, is
thine!

IX

TO THE LADY F. B. AND THE HON. MISS F.
Composed in the Grounds of Plass Newidd,
near Llangollen, 1824

A STREAM, to mingle with your favourite
Dee,
Along the VALE OF MEDITATION flows;
So styled by those fierce Britons, pleased
to see
In Nature's face the expression of re-
pose;
Or haply there some pious hermit chose
To live and die, the peace of heaven
his aim;
To whom the wild sequestered region
owes,
At this late day, its sanctifying name.
GLYN CAFAILLGARACH, in the Cambrian
tongue.
In ours, the VALE OF FRIENDSHIP, let
this spot
Be named; where, faithful to a low-
roofed Cot,

† Glyn Myrv,

On Deya's banks, ye have abode so
long;
Sisters in love, a love allowed to climb,
Even on this earth, above the reach
of Time!

X

TO THE TORRENT AT THE DEVIL'S BRIDGE.
NORTH WALES, 1824

How art thou named? In search of
what straggling land
From what huge height, descending!
Can such force
Of waters issue from a British source,
Or hath not Pindus fed thee, where
the band
Of Patriots scoop their freedom out,
with hand
Desperate as thine? Or come the
incessant shocks
From that young Stream, that smites
the throbbing rocks
Of Viannala? There I seem to stand,
As in life's morn: permitted to behold,
From the dread chasm, woods climb-
ing above woods,
In pomp that fades not; everlasting
snows;
And skies that ne'er relinquish their
repose;
Such power possess the family of floods
Over the minds of Poets, young or old!

XI

IN THE WOODS OF RYDAL

WILD Redbreast! hadst thou at Jemi-
ma's lip
Pecked, as at mine, thus boldly, Love
might say,
A half-blown rose had tempted thee
to sip
Its glistening dew; but hallowed is
the clay
Which the Muse warms; and I, whose
head is grey,
Am not unworthy of thy fellowship;
Nor could I let one thought—one mo-
tion—slip
That might thy sylvan Confidence
betray.
For are we not all His without whose
care
Vouchsafed no sparrow, falleth to the
ground?
Who gives his Angels wings to speed
through air,
And rolls the planets through the blue
profound;
Then peck or perch, fond Flutterer!
nor forbear
To trust a Poet in still musings bound.

XII

WHEN Philoctetes in the Lemnian isle
Like a Form sculptured on a monument
Lay couched; on him or his dread
bow unbent
Some wild Bird oft might settle and
beguile
The rigid features of a transient smile,
Disperse the tear, or to the sigh give
vent,
Slackening the pains of ruthless banish-
ment
From his lov'd home, and from heroic
toil.
And trust that spiritual Creatures
round us move,
Griefs to allay which Reason cannot
heal;
Yea, veriest reptiles have sufficed to
prove
To fettered wretchedness, that no Bastile
Is deep enough to exclude the light of
love,
Though man for brother man has ceased
to feel.

XIII

WHILE Anna's peers and early play-
mates tread,
In freedom, mountain-turf and river's
marge;
Or float with music in the festal barge;
Rein the proud steed, or through the
dance are led;
Her doom it is to press a weary bed—
Till oft her guardian Angel, to some
charge
More urgent called, will stretch his
wings at large,
And friends too rarely prop the languid
head.
Yet, helped by Genius—untired com-
forter,
The presence even of a stuffed Owl for
her
Can cheat the time; sending her fancy
out
To ivied castles and to moonlight skies,
Though he can neither stir a plume,
nor shout;
Nor veil, with restless film, his staring
eyes.

XIV

TO THE CUCKOO

Nor the whole warbling grove in concert
heard
When sunshine follows shower, the
breast can thrill
Like the first summons, Cuckoo! of
thy bill,
With its twin notes inseparably paired.

The captive 'mid damp vaults unsunned,
unaided,
Measuring the periods of his lonely doom,
That cry can reach; and to the sick
man's room
Sends gladness, by no languid smile
declared.
The lordly eagle-race through hostile
search
May perish; time may come when
never more
The wilderness shall hear the lion roar;
But, long as cock shall crow from house-
hold perch
To rouse the dawn, soft gales shall
speed thy wing.
And thy erratic voice be faithful to the
Spring!

XV

TO —

[Miss not the occasion: by the forelock take
That subtle Power, the never-halting Time,
Lest a mere moment's putting-off should make
Mischance almost as heavy as a crime.]
"WAIT, prithee, wait!" this answer
Lesbia threw
Forth to her Dove, and took no further
heed.
Her eye was busy, while her fingers flew
Across the harp, with soul engrossing
speed;
But from that bondage when her
thoughts were freed
She rose, and toward the close-shut
casement drew.
Whence the poor unregarded Favourite,
true
To old affections, had been heard to
plead
With flapping wing for entrance. What
a shriek
Forced from that voice so lately tuned
to a strain
Of harmony!—a shriek of terror, pain,
And self-reproach! for, from aloft, a
Kite
Pounced,—and the Dove, which from
its ruthless beak
She could not rescue, perished in her
sight!

XVI

THE INFANT M— M—

UNQUIET Childhood here by special
grace
Forgets her nature, opening like a flower
That neither feeds nor wastes its vital
power
In painful struggles. Months each
other chase,
And nought untunes that Infant's
voice; no trace

Of fretful temper sullies her pure cheek ;
Prompt, lively, self-sufficing, yet so meek

That one enrapt with gazing on her face
(Which even the placid innocence of death

Could scarcely make more placid,
heaven more bright)

Might learn to picture, for the eye of faith,

The Virgin, as she shone with kindred light ;

A nursing couched upon her mother's knee,

Beneath some shady palm of Galilee.

XVII

TO —, IN HER SEVENTIETH YEAR

SUCH age how beautiful ! O Lady bright, [finer

Whose mortal lineaments seem all re-
By favouring Nature and a saintly Mind

To something purer and more exquisite
Than flesh and blood ; whence'er thou meet'st my sight,

When I behold thy blanch'd unwithered cheek,

Thy temples fringed with locks of gleaming white,

And head that droops because the soul is meek,

Thee with the welcome Snowdrop I compare :

That child of winter, prompting thoughts that climb

From desolation toward the genial prime ;

Or with the Moon conquering earth's misty air, [light

And filling more and more with crystal
As pensive Evening deepens into night.

XVIII

TO RUTHA Q—

ROTHA, my Spiritual Child ! this head was grey

When at the sacred font for thee I stood :

Pledged till thou reach the verge of womanhood,

And shalt become thy own sufficient stay :

Too late, I feel, sweet Orphan ! was the day

For steadfast hope the contract to fulfil ;
Yet shall my blessing hover o'er thee still,

Embodied in the music of this Lay,
Breathed forth beside the peaceful mountain Stream

The river Rotha, that flows into Windermere from the Lakes of Grasmere and Rydal.

Whose murmur soothed thy languid Mother's ear

After her throes, this Stream of name more dear

Since thou dost bear it,—a memorial theme

For others ; for thy future self, a spell
To summon fancies out of Time's dark cell.

XIX

A GRAVE-STONE UPON THE FLOOR IN THE CLOISTERS OF WORCESTER CATHEDRAL

" MISERRIMUS ! " and neither name nor date,

Prayer, text, or symbol, graven upon the stone :

Nought but that word assigned to the unknown,

That solitary word—to separate
From all, and cast a cloud around, the fate

Of him who lies beneath. Most wretched one,

Who chose his epitaph ?—Himself alone
Could thus have dared the grave to agitate.

And claim, among the dead, this awful crown :

Nor doubt that he marked also for his own

Close to these cloistral steps a burial-place,

That every foot might fall with heavier tread,

Trampling upon his vileness. Stranger, pass

Softly !—To save the contrite, Jesus bled.

XX

ROMAN ANTIQUITIES DISCOVERED AT DISHOPSTONE, HEREFORDSHIRE

WHILE poring Antiquarians search the ground

Upturned with curious pains, the Bard, a Seer,

Takes fire :—The men that have been reappear ;

Romans for travel girt, for business gown'd ;

And some recline on couches, myrtle-crowned,

In festal glee : why not ? For fresh and clear,

As if its hues were of the passing year,
Dawns this time-buried pavement.

From that mound
Hoards may come forth of Trajans, Maximins,

Shrunk into coins with all their warlike toil :

A fierce impress issues with its foil
Of tenderness—the Wolf, whose speckling
Twins
The unlettered ploughboy pities when he
wins
The casual treasure from the furrowed
soil.

XXI

1830

CHATSWORTH! thy stately mansion, and
the pride
Of thy domain, strange contrast do
present
To house and home in many a craggy
rent
Of the wild Peak; where new-born
waters glide
Through fields whose thrifty occupants
abide
As in a dear and chosen banishment,
With every semblance of entire content;
So kind is simple Nature, fairly tried!
Yet He whose heart in childhood gave
her troth
To pastoral dales, thin-set with modest
farms,
May learn, if judgment strengthen with
his growth,
That, not for Fancy only, pomp hath
charms:
And, strenuous to protect from lawless
harms
The extremes of favoured life, may
honour both.

XXII

A TRADITION OF OKER HILL IN DARLEY
DALE, DERBYSHIRE

'Tis said that to the brow of yon fair
hill
Two Brothers clomb, and, turning face
from face,
Nor one look more exchanging, grief to
still
Or feed, each planted on that lofty place
A chosen Tree; then, eager to fulfil
Their courses, like two new-born rivers,
they
In opposite directions urged their way.
Down from the far-seen mount. No
blast might kill
Or blight that fond memorial;—the trees
grew,
And now entwine their arms; but ne'er
again
Embraced those Brothers upon earth's
wide plain;
Nor aught of mutual joy or sorrow
knew
Until their spirits mingled in the sea.
That to itself takes all, Eternity.

XXIII

FILIAL PIETY

(ON THE WAYSIDE BETWEEN PRESTON
AND LIVERPOOL)

UNTOUCHED through all severity of cold;
Inviolatè, what'er the cottage hearth
Might need for comfort, or for festal
mirth;
That Pile of Turf is half a century old:
Yes, Traveller! fifty winters have been
told
Since suddenly the dart of death went
forth
'Gainst him who raised it,—his last work
on earth:
Thence has it, with the Son, so strong a
hold [hands,
Upon his Father's memory, that his
Through reverence, touch it only to
repair
Its waste,—Though crumbling with each
breath of air.
In annual renovation thus it stands—
Rude Mausoleum! but wrens nestle
there,
And red-breasts warble when sweet
sounds are rare.

XXIV

TO THE AUTHOR'S PORTRAIT

[Painted at Rydal Mount, by W. Pickersgill,
Esq., for St. John's College, Cambridge.]

Go, faithful Portrait! and where long
hath knelt
Margaret, the saintly Foundress, take thy
place;
And, if Time spare the colours for the
grace
Which to the work surpassing skill hath
dealt,
Thou, on thy rock reclined, though
kingdoms melt
And states be torn up by the roots, wilt
seem
To breathe in rural peace, to hear the
stream,
And think and feel as once the Poet felt.
What'er thy fate, those features have
not grown
Unrecognised through many a household
tear
More prompt, more glad, to fall than
drops of dew
By morning shed around a flower half-
blown;
Tears of delight, that testified how true
To life thou art, and, in thy truth, how
dear!

XXV

Why art thou silent! Is thy love a plant
Of such weak fibre that the treacherous
air

Of absence withers what was once so fair?
 Is there no debt to pay, no boon to grant?
 Yet have my thoughts for thee been vigilant—
 Bound to thy service with unceasing care,
 The mind's least generous wish a mendicant
 For nought but what thy happiness could spare.
 Speak—though this soft warm heart, once free to hold
 A thousand tender pleasures, thine and mine,
 Be left more desolate, more dreary cold
 Than a forsaken bird's-nest filled with snow
 'Mid its own bush of leafless eglantine—
 Speak, that my torturing doubts their end may know!

XXVI

TO B. R. HAYDON, ON SEFING HIS PICTURE
 OF NAPOLEON BUONAPARTE ON THE
 ISLAND OF ST. HELENA

HAYDON! let worthier judges praise the skill
 Here by thy pencil shown in truth of lines
 And charm of colours; I applaud those signs
 Of thought, that give the true poetic thrill;
 That unnumbered whole of blank and still,
 Sky without cloud—ocean without a wave:
 And the one Man that laboured to enslave
 The World, sole-standing high on the bare hill—
 Back turned, arms folded, the unapparent face
 Tinged, we may fancy, in this dreary place
 With light reflected from the invisible sun
 Set, like his fortunes; but not set for aye
 Like them. The unguilty Power pursues his way,
 And before him doth dawn perpetual run.

XXVII

A POET!—He hath put his heart to school,
 Nor dares to move unpropped upon the staff
 Which Art hath lodged within his hand—
 must laugh
 By precept only, and shed tears by rule.

Thy Art be Nature; the live current quaff,
 And let the groveller sip his stagnant pool,
 In fear that else, when Critics graze and cool
 Have killed him, Scorn should write his epitaph.
 How does the Meadow-flower its bloom unfold?
 Because the lovely little flower is free
 Down to its root, and, in that freedom, bold;
 And so the grandeur of the Forest-tree
 Comes not by casting in a formal mould,
 But from its own divine vitality.

XXVIII

THE most alluring clouds that mount the sky
 Owe to a troubled element their forms,
 Their hues to sunset. If with raptured eye
 We watch their splendour, shall we covet storms,
 And wish the Lord of Day his slow decline
 Would hasten, that such pomp may float on high?
 Behold, already they forget to shine,
 Dissolve—and leave to him who gazed a sigh.
 Not loth to thank each moment for its boon
 Of pure delight, come whencesoe'er it may,
 Peace let us seek,—to steadfast things attune
 Calm expectations, leaving to the gay
 And volatile their love of transient bowers.
 The house that cannot pass away be ours.

XXIX

ON A PORTRAIT OF THE DUKE OF WELLINGTON
 UPON THE FIELD OF WATERLOO,
 BY HAYDON

By Art's bold privilege Warrior and War-horse stand
 On ground yet strewn with their last battle's wreck;
 Let the Steed glory while his Master's hand
 Lies fixed for ages on his conscious neck;
 But by the Chieftain's look, though at his side
 Hangs that day's treasured sword, how firm a check
 Is given to triumph and all human pride!
 Yon trophied Mound shrinks to a shadowy speck
 In his calm presence! Him the mighty deed

Eldest not, brought far nearer the grave's
rest,
As shows that time-worn face, for he
such seed
Has sown, as yields, we trust, the fruit
of fame
In Heaven; hence no one blushes for
thy name,
Conqueror, mid some sad thoughts,
divinely blest!

XXX

COMPOSED ON A MAY MORNING, 1836
LIFE with your Lambs, like day, is just
begun,
Yet Nature seems to them a heavenly
guide.
Does joy approach? they meet the com-
ing tide;
And sullenness avoid, as now they shun
Pale twilight's lingering glooms,—and
in the sun
Couch near their dams, with quiet satis-
fied;
Or gambol—each with his shadow at his
side.
Varying its shape, wherever he may run.
As they from turf yet ~~show~~ with sleepy
dew
All turn, and court life shining and the
green,
Where herbs look up, and opening
flowers are seen;
Why to God's goodness cannot We be
true,
And so, His gifts and promises between,
Feed to the last on pleasures ever new?

XXXI

Lo! where she stands fixed in a saint-like
trance,
One upward hand, as if she needed rest
From rapture, lying softly on her
breast!
Nor wants her eyeball an ethereal glance;
But not the less—nay more—that
countenance,
While thus illumined, tells of painful
strife
For a sick heart made weary of this life
By love, long crossed with adverse
circumstance.
—Would She were now as when she
hoped to pass
At God's appointed hour to them who
tread
Heaven's sapphire pavement, yet
breathed well content,
Well pleased, her foot should print
earth's common grass,
Lived thankful for day's light, for daily
bread, [spent.
For health, and time in obvious duty

W. P.

XXXII

TO A PAINTER

ALL praise the Likeness by thy skill
portrayed;
But 'tis a fruitless task to paint for me.
Who, yielding not to change: Time has
made,
By the habitual light of memory see
I yes unbedimmed, see bloom that can-
not fade.
And smiles that from their birth-place
ne'er shall flee
Into the land where ghosts and phan-
toms be;
And, seeing this, own nothing in its
stead.
Couldst thou go back into far-distant
years,
Or share with me, fond thought! that
inward eye,
Then, and then only, Painter! could
thy Art
The visual powers of Nature satisfy.
Which hold, whate'er to common sight
appears, [heart.
Their sovereign empire in a faithful

XXXIII

ON THE SAME SUBJECT

THOUGH I beheld at first with blank
surprise
This Work, I now have gazed on it so
long
I see its truth with reluctant eyes:
O, my Belovéd! I have done thee
wrong,
Conscious of blessedness, but, whence
it sprung,
Ever too heedless, as I now perceive
Morn into noon did pass, noon into eve,
And the old day was welcome as the
young,
As welcome, and as beautiful—in sooth
More beautiful, as being a thing more
holy:
Thanks to thy virtues, to the eternal
youth
Of all thy goodness, never melancholy;
To thy large heart and humble mind,
that cast
Into one vision, future, present, past.

XXXIV

HARK! 'tis the Thrush, undaunted,
undeprest,
By twilight premature of cloud and
rain;
Nor does that roaring wind deaden his
strain,
Who carols thinking of his Love and
nest, [blest.
And seems, as more incited, still more

Q.

Thanks ; thou hast snapped a fire-side
Prisoner's chain,
Exulting Warbler ! eased a fretted brain.
And in a moment charmed my cares to
rest.

Yes, I will forth, bold Bird ! and front
the blast.

That we may sing together, if thou wilt,
So loud, so clear, my Partner through
life's day,

Mute in her nest love-chosen, if not love-
built

Like thine, shall gladden, as in seasons
past,

Thrilled by loose snatches of the social
Lay.

RYDAL MOUNT, 1838.

XXXV

'Tis He whose yester-evening's high dis-
dain

Beat back the roaring storm—but how
subdued

His day-break note, a sad vicissitude !
Does the hour's drowsy weight his glee
restrain ?

Or, like the nightingale, her joyous
vein

Pleased to renounce, does this dear
Thrush attune

His voice to suit the temper of yon
Moon

Doubly depressed, setting, and in her
wane ?

Rise, tardy Sun ! and let the Songster
prove

(The balance trembling between night
and morn

No longer) with what ecstasy upborne
He can pour forth his spirit. In heaven
above,

And earth below, they best can serve
true gladness

Who meet most feelingly the calls of
sadness.

XXXVI

OH what a Wreck ! how changed in
mien and speech !

Yet—though dread Powers, that work in
mystery, spin

Entanglings of the brain ; though
shadows stretch

O'er the chilled heart—reflect ; far, far
within

Hers is a holy Being, freed from Sin.
She is not what she seems, a forlorn
wretch,

But delegated Spirits comfort fetch
To Her from heights that Reason may
not win.

Like Children, She is privileged to hold

Divine communion ; both do live and
move,

Whatever to shallow Faith their ways
unfold,

Inly illumined by Heaven's pitying love ;
Love pitying innocence not long to last.

In them—in Her our sins and sorrows
past.

XXXVII

INTENT on gathering wool from hedge
and brake

Yon busy Little-ones rejoice that soon
A poor old Dame will bless them for the
boon :

Great is their glee while flake they add
to flake

With rival earnestness ; far other strife
They will hereafter move them, if they
make

Pastime their idol, give their day of life
To pleasure snatched for reckless plea-
sure's sake.

Can pomp and show allay one heart-born
grief ?

Pains which the World inflicts can she
requite ?

Not for an interval however brief ;
The silent thoughts that search for stead-
fast light,

Love from her depths, and Duty in her
might,

And Faith—these only yield secure
relief.

March 8, 1842.

XXXVIII

A PLEA FOR AUTHORS, MAY, 1838
FAILING impartial measure to dispense
To every suitor, Equity is lame ;

And social Justice, stript of reverence
For natural rights, a mockery and a
shame ;

Law but a servile dupe of false pretence,
If, guarding grossest things from common
claim

Now and for ever, She, to works that
came

From mind and spirit, grudge a short-
lived fence.

“ What ! lengthened privilege, a lineal
tie,

For Books ! ” Yes, heartless Ones, or be
it proved

That 'tis a fault in Us to have lived and
loved

Like others, with like temporal hopes to
die ;

No public harm that Genius from her
course

Be turned ; and streams of truth dried
up, even at their source !

XXXIX

VALEDICTORY SONNET

Closing the Volume of Sonnets published in 1838

SERVING no haughty Muse, my hands have here

Disposed some cultured Flowerets (drawn from spots

Where they bloomed singly, or in scattered knots),

Each kind in several beds of one parterre; Both to allure the casual Loiterer,

And that, so placed, my Nurslings may requite

Studious regard with opportune delight, Nor be unthanked, unless I fondly err,

But metaphor dismissed, and thanks apart,

Reader, farewell! My last words let them be—

If in this book Fancy and Truth agree: If simple Nature trained by careful Art

Through It have won a passage to thy heart:

Grant me thy love; I crave no other fee!

XL

TO THE REV. CHRISTOPHER WORDSWORTH, D.D., MASTER OF HARROW SCHOOL,

After the perusal of his *Theophilus Anglicanus*, recently published

ENLIGHTENED Teacher, gladly from thy hand

Have I received this proof of pains bestowed

By Thee to guide thy Pupils on the road That, in our native isle, and every land,

The Church, when trusting in divine command

And in her Catholic attributes, hath trod:

O may these lessons be with profit scanned

To thy heart's wish, thy labour blest by God!

So the bright faces of the young and Shall look more bright—the happy,

happier still;

Catch, in the pauses of their keenest play, Motions of thought which elevate the will

And, like the Spire that from your classic Hill

Points heavenward, indicate the end and way.

RYDAL MOUNT, Dec. 11, 1843.

XLI

TO THE PLANET VENUS, Upon its approximation (as an Evening Star) to the Earth, Jan. 1838.

WHAT strong allurements draws, what spirit guides,

Thee, Vesper! brightening still, as if the nearer

Thou com'st to man's abode the spot grew dearer

Night after night? True is it Nature hides

Her treasures less and less.—Man now presides

In power, where once he trembled in his weakness;

Science advances with gigantic strides: But are we aught enriched in love and

weakness?

Aught dost thou see, bright Star! of pure and wise

More than in humbler times graced human story:

That makes our hearts more apt to sympathise

With heaven, our souls more fit for future glory.

When earth shall vanish from our closing eyes,

Ere we lie down in our last dormitory?

XLII

WANSFELL! this Household has a favoured lot,

Living with liberty on thee to gaze.

To watch while Morn first crowns thee with her rays,

Or when along thy breast, serenely float

Evening's angelic clouds. Yet ne'er a note

Hath sounded (shame upon the Bard!) thy praise

For all that thou, as if from heaven, hast brought

Of glory lavished on our quiet days.

Bountiful Son of Earth! when we are gone

From every object dear to mortal sight, As soon we shall be, may these words

attest

How oft, to elevate our spirits, shone Thy visionary majesties of light,

How in thy pensive glooms our hearts found rest.

• Dec. 24, 1842.

XLIII

WHILE beams of orient light shoor wide and high,

Deep in the vale a little rural Town?

Breatheth forth a cloud-like creature of its own.

That mounts not toward the radiant morning sky,

But, with a less ambitious sympathy,

• The Hill that rises to the south-east, above Ambleside.

• Ambleside

Hangs o'er its Parent waking to the
cares
Troubles and toils that every day
prepares.
So Fancy, To the musing Poet's eye,
Endears that Lingerer. And how blest
her sway
(Like influence never may my soul
reject)
If the calm Heaven, now to its zenith
decked
With glorious forms in numberless
array,
To the lone shepherd on the hills disclose
Gleams from a world in which the saints
repose.

Jan. 1, 1843.

XLIV

In my mind's eye a Temple, like a cloud
Slowly surmounting some invidious hill,
Rose out of darkness : the bright Work
stood still :
And might of its own beauty have been
proud,
But it was fashioned and to God was
vowed
By Virtues that diffused, in every part,
Spirit divine through forms of human
art :
Faith had her arch—her arch, when
winds blow loud,
Into the consciousness of safety
thrilled ;
And Love her towers of dread founda-
tion laid
Under the grave of things ; Hope had
her spire
Star-high, and pointing still to something
higher : [it said,
Trembling I gazed, but heard a voice—
"Hell-gates are powerless Phantoms
when we build."

XLV

ON THE PROJECTED KENDAL AND WIN-
DERMERE RAILWAY

Is then no nook of English ground
secure
From rash assault ?¹ Schemes of tire-
mient sown

¹ The degree and kind of attachment which many of the yeomanry feel to their small inheritances can scarcely be over-rated. Near the house of one of them stands a magnificent tree, which a neighbour of the owner advised him to fell for profit's sake. "Fell it!" exclaimed the yeoman, "I had rather fall on my knees and worship it." It happens, I believe, that the intended railway would pass through this little property, and I hope that an apology for the answer will not be thought necessary by one who enters into the strength of the feel-

In youth, and mid the busy world kept
pure
As when their earliest flowers of hope
were blown,
Must perish ;—how can they this blight
endure ?
And must he too the ruthless change
benoan
Who scorns a false utilitarian lure
Mid his paternal fields at random thrown ?
Baffle the threat, bright Scene, from
Orrest-head
Given to the pausing traveller's rapturous
glance :
Plead for thy peace, thou beautiful
romance
Or nature: and, if human hearts be dead,
Speak: passing winds; ye torrents,
With your strong
And constant voice, protest against
the wrong.

October 12, 1844.

XLVI

Proud were ye, Mountains, when, in
times of old,
Your patriot-sons, to stem invasive war,
Intrenched your brows; ye gloried in
each scar :
Now, for your shame, a Power, the
Thirst of Gold,
That rules o'er Britain like a baneful
star,
Wills that your peace, your beauty,
shall be sold,
And clear way made for her triumphal
car
Through the beloved retreats your arms
enfold !
Heard ye that Whistle ? As her long-
linked Train
Swept onwards, did the vision cross your
view ?

Yes, ye were startled ;—and, in balance
true,
Weighing the mischief with the promised
gain,
Mountains, and Vales, and Floods, I
call on you
To share the passion of a just disdain.

XLVII

AT FURNES ABBEY

Here, where, of havoc tired and rash
undoing,
Man left this Structure to become Time's
prey
A soothing spirit follows in the way
That Nature takes, her counter-work
pursuing.
See how her ivy clasps the sacred
Ruin
To prevent or beautify decay :

And, on the mouldered walls, how
 bright, how gay,
 The flowers in pearly dew's bloom
 renewing!
 Thanks to the place, blessings upon the
 hour;
 Even as I speak the rising Sun's first
 smile
 Gleams on the grass-crowned top of yon
 tall Tower [claim]
 Whose cawing occupants with joy pro-
 Prescriptive title to the shattered pile
 Where, Cavendish, *thine* seems nothing
 but a name!

XLVIII

AT FURNESS ABBEY

WELL have yon Railway Labourers to
 this ground
 Withdrawn for noontide rest. They
 sit, they walk
 Among the Ruins, but no idle talk

Is heard; to grave demeanour all are
 bound;
 And from one voice a Hymn with tuneful
 sound
 Hallows once more the long-deserted
 Quire
 And thrills the old sepulchral earth,
 around.
 Others look up, and with fixed eyes
 admire
 That wide-spanned arch, wondering
 how it was raised,
 To keep, so high in air, its strength and
 grace:
 All seem to feel the spirit of the place,
 And by the general reverence God is
 praised:
 Profane Despoilers, stand ye not re-
 proved,
 While thus these simple-hearted men
 are moved?
 June 21, 1845.

MEMORIALS OF A TOUR IN
SCOTLAND

1803

I
DEPARTURE

FROM THE VALE OF GRASMERE. AUGUST,

1803

THE gentlest Shade that walked Elysian
 plains
 Might sometimes covet dissoluble chains;
 Even for the tenants of the zone that
 lies
 Beyond the stars, celestial Paradise,
 Methinks 'twould heighten joy, to
 overleap
 At will the crystal battlements, and peep
 Into some other region, though less fair,
 To see how things are made and
 managed there.
 Change for the worse might please,
 incursion boid
 Into the tracts of darkness and of cold;
 O'er Limbo lake with airy flight to steer,
 And on the verge of Chaos hang in feath-
 er animation: often do I find,
 Power in my breast, wings growing in
 my mind,
 Then, when some rock or hill is overpast,
 Perchance without one look behind me
 east,
 Some barrier with which Nature, from
 the birth
 Of things, has fenced this fairest spot
 on earth.

O pleasant transit, Grasmere! to resign
 Such happy fields, abodes so calm as
 thine;
 Not like an outcast with himself at strife;
 The slave of business, time, or care for
 life,
 But moved by choice; or, if constrained
 in part,
 Yet still with Nature's freedom at the
 heart;—
 To, cull contentment upon wildest
 shores,
 And luxuries extract from bleakest
 moors;
 With prompt embrace all beauty to
 enfold,
 And having rights in all that we behold.
 —Then why these lingering steps?
 A bright adieu,
 For a brief absence, proves that love
 is true;
 Ne'er can the way be irksome or forlorn
 That winds into itself for sweet return.

II

AT THE GRAVE OF BURNS

1803

SEVEN YEARS AFTER HIS DEATH

I SHIVER, Spirit fierce and bold,
 At thought of what I now behold:
 As vapours breathed from dungeons
 cold

Strike pleasure dead,
So sadness comes from out the mould
Where Burns is laid.

And have I then thy bones so near,
And thou forbidden to appear?
As if it were thyself that's here
I shrink with pain;
And both my wishes and my fear
Alike are vain.

Off weight—nor press on weight,!--
away

Dark thoughts!--they came, but not
to stay;

With chastened feelings would I pay
The tribute due

To him, and aught that hides his clay
From mortal view.

Fresh as the flower, whose modest worth
He sang, his genius 'glinted' forth.
Rose like a star that touching earth,
For so it seems,

Doth glorify its humble birth
With matchless beams.

The piercing eye, the thoughtful brow,
The struggling heart, where be they
now!--

Full soon the Aspirant of the plough,
The prompt, the brave,
Slept, with the obscurest, in the low
And silent grave.

I mourned with thousands, but as one
More deeply grieved, for He was gone
Whose light I hailed when first it shone,
And showed my youth
How Verse may build a princely throne
On humble truth.

Alas! where'er the current tends,
Regret pursues and with it blends,—
Huge Criffel's hoary top ascends
By Skiddaw seen,—

Neighbours we were, and loving friends
We might have been;

True friends though diversely inclined;
But heart with heart and mind with
mind,

Where the main fibres are entwined,
Through Nature's skill,
May even by contraries be joined
More closely still.

The tear will start, and let it flow;
Thou 'poor Inhabitant below,'
At this sad moment—even so—

Might we together
Have sate and talked where gowans blow,
Or on wild heather.

What treasures would have then been
placed

Within my reach; of knowledge graced
By fancy what a rich repast!
But why go on!--

Oh! spare to sweep, thou mournful blast,
His grave grass-grown.

There, too, a Son, his joy and pride,
(Not three weeks past the Stiffling died,)
Lies gathered to his Father's side,
Soul-moving sight!
Yet one to which is not denied
Some sad delight.

For he is safe, a quiet bed
Lath early found among the dead,
Harboured where none can be misled,
Wronged, or distressed,
And surely here it may be said
That such are blest.

And oh for Thee, by pitying grace
Checked oft-times in a devious race,
May He who halloweth the place
Where Man is laid
Receive thy Spirit in the embrace
For which it prayed!

Sighing I turned away; but ere
Night fell I heard, or seemed to hear,
Music that sorrow comes not near,
A ritual hymn,
Chaunted in love that casts out fear
By Séraphim.

III THOUGHTS

SUGGESTED THE DAY FOLLOWING, ON THE
BANKS OF NITH, NEAR THE POET'S
RESIDENCE

Too frail to keep the lofty vow
That must have followed when his brow
Was wreathed—"The Vision" tells us
how—

With holly spray,
He faltered, drifted to and fro,
And passed away.

Well might such thoughts, dear Sister,
throng

Our minds when, lingering all too long,
Over the grave of Burns we hung
In social grief—
Indulged as if it were a wrong
To seek relief.

But, leaving each unquiet theme
Where gentlest judgments may misdeem
And prompt to welcome every gleam
Of good and fair,
Let us beside this limpid Stream
Breathe hopeful air.

Enough of sorrow, wreck, and blight;
Think rather of those moments bright
When to the consciousness of right
His course was true,
When Wisdom prospered in his sight
And Virtue grew.

Yes, freely let our hearts expand,
 Freely as in youth's season bland,
 When side by side, his Book in hand,
 We wot to stray.
 Our pleasure varying at command
 Of each sweet Lay.

How oft inspired must he have trod
 These pathways, yon far-stretching road!
 There lurks his home; in that Abode,
 With mirth elate,
 Or in his nobly-pensive mood,
 The Rustic sate.

Proud thoughts that Image overawes,
 Before it humbly let us pause,
 And ask of Nature, from what cause
 And by what rules
 She trained her Burns to win applause
 That shames the Schools.

Through busiest street and loneliest glen
 Are felt the flashes of his pen;
 He rules mid winter snows, and when
 Bees fill their hives;
 Deep in the general heart of men
 His power survives.

What need of fields in some far clime
 Where Heroes, Sages, Bards sublime,
 And all that fetched the flowing rhyme
 From genuine springs,
 Shall dwell together till old Time
 Folds up his wings?

Sweet mercy! to the gates of Heaven
 This Minstrel lead, his sins forgiven;
 The rueful conflict, the heart riven
 With vain endeavour,
 And memory of Earth's bitter leaven,
 Effaced for ever.

But why to him confine the prayer,
 When kindred thoughts and yearnings
 bear

On the frail heart the purest share
 With all that live?—
 The best of what we do and are
 Just God, forgive!¹

IV

TO THE SONS OF BURNS

AFTER VISITING THE GRAVE OF THEIR
 FATHER

"The Poet's grave is in the corner of the church-
 yard. We looked at it with melancholy and
 painful reflections, repeating to each other his
 own verses—

"Is there a man whose judgment clear" etc.
 —Extract from the *Journal of my Fellow-traveller*.

"Mid crowded obelisks and urns
 I sought the untimely grave of Burns;
 Sons of the Bard, my heart still mourns
 With sorrow true;

And more would grieve, but that it turns
 Trembling to you!

¹ See Note.

Through twilight shades of good and ill
 Ye now are panting up life's hill,
 And more than common strength and skill
 Must ye display;

If ye would give the better will
 Its lawful sway.

Hath Nature strung your nerves to bear
 Intemperance with less harm, beware!
 But if the Poet's wit ye share,
 Like him can speed
 The social hour—of tenfold care
 There will be need;

For honest men delight will take
 To spare your failings for his sake,
 Will flatter you.—and fool and rake
 Your steps pursue;
 And of your Father's name will make
 A snare for you.

Far from their noisy haunts retire,
 And add your voices to the quire
 That sanctify the cottage fire
 With service meet;
 There seek the genius of your Sire,
 His spirit greet;

Or where, 'mid "lonely heights and
 hows,"

He paid to Nature tuneful vows;
 Or wiped his honourable brows
 Bedewed with toil,
 While reapers strove, or busy ploughs
 Upturned the soil;

His judgment with benignant ray
 Shall guide, his fancy cheer, your way;
 But ne'er to a seductive lay
 Let faith be given;
 Nor deem that "light which leads astray,
 Is light from Heaven."

Let no mean hope your souls enslave;
 Be independent, generous, brave;
 Your Father such example gave,
 And such revere;
 But be admonished by his grave,
 And think, and fear!

V*

ELLEN IRWIN

OR

THE BRAES OF KIRTLE²

FAIR Ellen Irwin, when she sate
 Upon the braes of Kirtle,
 Was lovely as a Grecian maid
 Adorned with wreaths of myrtle;
 Young Adam Bruce beside her lay,
 And there did they beguile the day,
 With love and gentle speeches,
 Beneath the budding beeches.

² The Kirtle is a river in the southern part
 of Scotland, on the banks of which the events
 here related took place.

From many knights and many squires
The Bruce had been selected :
And Gordon, fairest of them all,
By Ellen was rejected.
Sad tidings to that noble Youth !
For it may be proclaimed with truth,
If Bruce hath loved sincerely,
That Gordon loves as dearly.

But what are Gordon's form and face,
His shattered hopes and crosses.
To them, 'mid Kirtle's pleasant braes,
Reclined on flowers and mosses,
Alas that ever he was born !
The Gordon, couched behind a thorn,
Sees them and their carressing ;
Beholds them blest and blessing.

Proud Gordon, maddened by the thoughts
That through his brain are travelling,
Rushed forth, and at the heart of Bruce
He launched a deadly javelin !
Fair Ellen saw it as it came,
And, starting up to meet the same,
Did with her body cover
The Youth, her chosen lover.

And, falling into Bruce's arms,
Thus died the beauteous Ellen.
Thus, from the heart of her True-love,
The mortal spear repelling,
And Bruce, as soon as he had slain
The Gordon, sailed away to Spain ;
And fought with rage incessant
Against the Moorish crescent.

But many days, and many months,
And many years ensuing,
This wretched Knight did vainly seek
The death that he was wooing.
So, coming his last help to crave
Heart-broken, upon Ellen's grave
His body he extended,
And there his sorrow ended.

Now ye, who willingly have heard
The tale I have been telling,
May in Kirkconnel churchyard view
The grave of lovely Ellen :
By Ellen's side the Bruce is laid ;
And, for the stone upon his head,
May no rude hand defence it,
And its forlorn dirge jar !

VI

TO A HIGHLAND GIRL

(AT INVERSNYDE, UPON LOCH LOMOND)

SWEET Highland Girl, a very shower
Of beauty is thy earthly dower !
Twice seven consenting years have shed
Their utmost bounty on thy head :
And these grey rocks ; that household
Lawn :

Those trees, a veil just half withdrawn :

This fall of water that doth make
A murmur near the silent lake ;
This little bay ; a quiet road
That holds in shelter thy Abode—
In truth together do ye seem
Like something fashioned in a dream ;
Such Forms as from their covert peep
When earthly cares are laid asleep !
But, O fair Creature ! in the light
Of common day, so heavenly bright,
I bless Thee, Vision as thou art,
I bless thee with a human heart ;
God shield thee to thy latest years !
Thee, neither know I, nor thy peers ;
And yet my eyes are filled with tears.

With earnest feeling I shall pray
For thee when I am far away :
For never saw I nien, or face,
In which more plainly I could trace
Benevolence and home-bred sense
Ripe in perfect innocence.
Here scattered, like a random seed,
Remote from men, Thou dost not need
The embarrassed look of shy distress,
And maidenly shamefacedness :
Thou wear'st upon thy forehead clear
The freedom of a Mountaineer :
A face with gladness overspread !
Soft smiles, by human kindness bred !
And seemliness complete, that ways
Thy courtesies, about thee plays ;
With no restraint, but such as springs
From quick and eager visitings
Of thoughts that lie beyond the reach
Of thy few words of English speech :
A bondage sweetly brooked, a strife
That gives thy gestures grace and life !
So have I, not unmoved in mind,
Seen birds of tempest-loving kind—
Thus beating up against the wind.

What hand but would a garland cull
For thee who art so beautiful ?
O happy pleasure ! here to dwell
Beside thee in some heathy dell ;
Adopt your homely ways, and dress,
A Shepherd, thou a Shepherdess !
But I could frame a wish for thee
More like a grave reality :
Thou art to me but as a wave
Of the wild sea ; and I would have
Some claim upon thee, if I could,
Though but of common neighbourhood.
What joy to hear thee, and to see !
Thy elder Brother I would be,
Thy Father—anything to thee !

Now thanks to Heaven ! that of its
grace

Hath led me to this lonely place.
Joy have I had ; and going hence
I bear away my recompense.
In spots like these it is we prize
Our Memory, feel that she hath eyes :

Then, why should I be loth to stir?
 I feel this place was made for her;
 To give new pleasure like the past,
 Continued long as life shall last.
 No, am I loth, though pleased at heart,
 Sweet Highland Girl I from thee to part?
 For I, methinks, till I grow old,
 As fair before me shall behold,
 As I do now, the cabin small,
 The lake, the bay, the waterfall;
 And Thee, the Spirit of them all!

VII GLENALMAIN

OR,

THE NARROW GLEN

In this still place, remote from men,
 Sleeps Ossian, in the NARROW GLEN;
 In this still place, where murmurs on
 But one meek streamlet, only one:
 He sang of battles, and the breath
 Of stormy war, and violent death;
 And should, methinks, when all was past,
 Have rightfully been laid at last
 Where rocks were rudely leaped, and
 rent

As by a spirit turbulent;
 Where sights were rough, and sounds
 were wild,
 And everything unreconciled;
 In some complaining, dim retreat,
 For fear and melancholy meet;
 But this is calm; there cannot be
 A more entire tranquillity.

Does then the Bard sleep here indeed?
 Or is it but a groundless creed?
 What matters it?—I blame them not
 Whose Fancy in this lonely Spot
 Was moved; and in such way expressed
 Their notion of its perfect rest.
 A convent, even a hermit's cell,
 Would break the silence of this Dell:
 It is not quiet, is not ease;
 But something deeper far than these:
 The separation that is here
 Is of the grave; and of austere
 Yet happy feelings of the dead:
 And, therefore, was it rightly said
 That Ossian, last of all his race
 Lies buried in this lonely place.

VIII STEPPING WESTWARD.

While my Fellow-traveller and I were walking
 by the side of Loch Ketterline, one fine evening
 after sunset, in our road to a Hut where, in
 the course of our Tour, we had been hospitably
 entertained some weeks before, we met, in
 one of the loneliest parts of that solitary
 region, two well-dressed Women, one of whom
 said to us, by way of greeting, "What, you
 are stepping westward?"

"WHAT, you are stepping westward?"
 —"Yea."

"'Twould be a wildish destiny,
 If we, who thus together roam
 In a strange Land, and far from home,
 Were in this place the guests of Chance:
 Yet who would stop, or fear to advance,
 Though home or shelter he had none,
 With such a sky to lead him on?"

The dewy ground was dark and cold;
 Behind, all gloomy to behold;
 And stepping westward seemed to be
 A kind of heavenly destiny:
 I liked the greeting; 'twas a sound
 Of something without place or bound;
 And seemed to give me spiritual right
 To travel through that region bright.

The voice was soft, and she who spake
 Was walking by her native lake:
 The salutation had to me
 The very sound of courtesy:
 Its power was felt; and while my eye
 Was fixed upon the glowing Sky,
 The echo of the voice enwrought
 A human sweetness with the thought
 Of travelling through the world that lay
 Before me in my endless way.

IX THE SOLITARY REAPER

BEHOLD her, single in the field,
 Yon solitary Highland Lass!
 Reaping and singing by herself;
 Stop here, or gently pass!
 Alone she cuts and binds the grain,
 And sings a melancholy strain;
 O listen! for the Vale profound
 Is overflowing with the sound.

No Nightingale did ever chaunt
 More welcome notes to weary bands
 Of travellers in some shady haunt,
 Among Arabian sands:
 A voice so thrilling ne'er was heard
 In spring-time from the Cuckoo-bird
 Breaking the silence of the seas
 Among the farthest Hebrides.

Will no one tell me what she sings?—
 Perhaps the plaintive numbers flow
 For old, unhappy, far-off things,
 And battles long ago:

Or is it some more humble lay,
 Familiar matter of to-day?
 Some natural sorrow, loss, or pain,
 That has been, and may be again?

What'er the theme, the Maiden sang
 As if her song could have no ending;
 I saw her singing at her work,
 And o'er the sickle bending:—

I listened, motionless and still ;
And, as I mounted up the hill,
The music in my heart I bore,
Long after it was heard no more.

X
ADDRESS

TO
KILCHURN CASTLE, UPON LOCH
AWE

"From the top of the hill a most impressive scene opened upon our view, — a ruined Castle on an Island (for an Island the flood had made it) at some distance from the shore, backed by a Cove of the Mountain Cruachan, down which came a foaming stream. The Castle occupied every foot of the Island that was visible to us, appearing to rise out of the water, — mists rested upon the mountain side, with spots of sunshine; there was a mild desolation in the low grounds, a solemn grandeur in the mountains, and the Castle was wild, yet stately, — not dismantled of turrets — nor the walls broken down, though obviously a ruin." — *Extract from the Journal of my Companion.*

CHILD of loud-throated War ! the mountain Stream
Roars in thy hearing : but thy hour of rest
Is come, and thou art silent in thy age ;
Save when the wind sweeps by and sounds are caught
Ambiguous, neither wholly thine nor theirs.

Oh ! there is life that breathes not ;
Powers there are
That touch each other to the quick in modes
Which the gross world no sense hath to perceive,
No soul to dream of. What art Thou, from care

Cast off — abandoned by thy rugged Sire,
Nor by soft Peace adopted ; though, in place
And in dimension, such that thou might'st seem

But a mere footstool to yon sovereign Lord,
Huge Cruachan, (a thing that meaner hills

Might crush, nor know that it had suffered harm ;)
Yet he, not loth, in favour of thy claims
To reverence, suspends his own ; submitting

All that the God of Nature hath conferred,
All that he holds in common with the stars,

To the memorial majesty of Time
Impersonated in thy calm decay !

Take, then, thy seat, Vicegerent unreprieved !

Now, while a farewell gleam of evening light

Is fondly lingering on thy shattered front,

Do thou, in turn, be paramount ; and rule

Over the pomp and beauty of a scene
Whose mountains, torrents, lake, and woods, unite

To pay thee homage ; and with these are joined,

In willing admiration and respect,
Two Hearts, which in thy presence

might be called
Youthful as Spring. — Shade of departed

Power,
Skateen of unfleshed humanity.

The chronicle were welcome that should call

Into the compass of distinct regard
The toils and struggles of thy infant

years !
Yon foaming flood seems motionless

as ice ;
Its dizzy turbulence eludes the eye,

Frozen by distance ; so, majestic Fife,
To the perception of this Age, appear

Thy fierce beginnings, softened and subdued

And quieted in character — the strife,
The pride, the fury uncontrollable,

Lost on the aerial heights of the Crusades !¹

XI

ROB ROY'S GRAVE

The history of Rob Roy is sufficiently known ;
his grave is near the head of Loch Ketterine,
in one of those small pinfold-like Burial-grounds, of neglected and desolate appearance, which the traveller meets with in the Highlands of Scotland.

A FAMOUS man is Robin Hood.
The English ballad-singer's joy !
And Scotland has a thief as good,
An outlaw of as daring mood ;
She has her brave Rob Roy !
Then clear the weeds from off his Grave,
And let us chant a passing stave,
In honour of that Hero brave !

Heaven gave Rob Roy a dauntless heart

And wondrous length and strength of arm ;

Nor ceased he more to quell his foes,
Or keep his friends from harm.

¹ The tradition is, that the Castle was built by a Lady during the absence of her Lord in Palestine.

Yet was Rob Roy as wise as brave :
 Forgive me if the phrase be strong ;—
 A Poet worthy of Rob Roy
 Must scorn a timid song.

Say, then, that he was wise as brave :
 As wise in thought as bold in deed :
 For in the principles of things
 He sought his moral creed.

Said generous Rob, "What need of
 books ?
 Burn all the statutes and their shelves,
 They stir us up against our kind :
 And worse, against ourselves.

We have a passion—make a law,
 Too false to guide us or control !
 And for the law itself we fight
 In bitterness of soul.

And, puzzled, blinded thus, we lose
 Distinctions that are plain and few :
 These find I graven on my heart :
 That tells me what to do.

The creatures see, of flood and field,
 And those that travel on the wind :
 With them no strife can last : they live
 In peace, and peace of mind.

For why ?—because the good olderule
 Sufficeth them, the simple plan,
 That they should take, who have the
 power,

And they should keep who can.

A lesson that is quickly learned,
 A signal this which all can see !
 Thus nothing here provokes the strong
 To wanton cruelty.

All freakishness of mind is checked :
 He tamed, who foolishly aspires ;
 While to the measure of his might
 Each fashions his desires.

All kinds, and creatures, stand and fall
 By strength of prowess or of wit :
 'Tis God's appointment who must sway,
 And who is to submit.

Since, then, the rule of right is plain,
 And longest life is but a day ;
 To have my ends, maintain my rights,
 I'll take the shortest way.

And thus among these rocks he lived,
 Through summer heat and winter snow ;
 The Eagle, he was lord above,
 And Rob was lord below.

So was it—would, at least, have been
 But through untowardness of fate ;
 For Polity was then too strong,
 He came an age too late :

Or shall we say an age too soon ?
 For, were the bold Man living now,

How might he flourish in his pride,
 With buds on every bough !

Then rents and factors, rights of chase,
 Sheriffs, and lairds and their domains,
 Would all have seemed but paltry
 things,

Not worth a moment's pains.

Rob Roy had never lingered here,
 To these few meagre Vales confined ;
 But thought how wide the world, the
 times

How fairly to his mind !

And to his Sword he would have said
 "Do Thou my sovereign will enact,
 From land to land through half the earth !
 Judge thou of law and fact !

'Tis fit that we should do our part,
 Becoming, that mankind should learn
 That we are not to be surpassed
 In fatherly concern.

Of old things all are over old,
 Of good things none are good enough :—
 We'll shew that we can help to frame
 A world of other stuff.

I, too, will have my kings that take
 From me the sign of life and death :
 Kingdoms shall shift about, like clouds,
 Obedient to my breath."

And, if the word had been fulfilled,
 As might have been, then, thought
 of joy ! [Boast,
 France would have had her present
 And we our own Rob Roy !

Oh ! say not so : compare them not ;
 I would not wrong thee, Champion
 brave !
 Would wrong thee nowhere ; least of all
 Here standing by thy grave.

For Thou, although with some wild
 thoughts,
 Wild Chieftain of a savage Clan !
 Hadst this to boast of ; thou didst love
 The liberty of man.

And, had it been thy lot to live
 With us who now behold the light,
 Thou would'st have nobly stirred thyself,
 And battled for the Right.

For thou wert still the poor man's stay,
 The poor man's heart, the poor man's
 hand ; [strength,
 And all the oppressed, who wanted
 Had thine at their command.

Bear witness many a pensive sigh
 Of thoughtful Herdsman when he
 strays

Alone upon Loch Vool's heights,
 And by Loch Lomond's braes !

And, far and near, through vale and hill,
Are facts that attest the same;
The proud heart, flashing through the eyes,

At sound of Rob Roy's name.

XII

SONNET

COMPOSED AT — CASTLE

DEGENERATE Douglas! oh, the unworthy Lord!

Whom mere despite of heart could so far please,

And love of havoc, (for with such disease Fame taxes him,) that he could send forth word

To level with the dust a noble horde,
A brotherhood of venerable Trees,

Leaving an ancient dome, and towers like these.

Beggared and outraged!—Many hearts deplored

The fate of those old Trees; and oft with pain

The traveller, at this day, will stop and gaze

On wrongs, which Nature scarcely seems to heed:

For sheltered places, bosoms, nooks, and bays.

And the pure mountains, and the gentle Tweed,

And the green silent pastures, yet remain.

XIII

YARROW UNVISITED

(See the various Poems the scene of which is laid upon the banks of the Yarrow; in particular, the exquisite Ballad of Hamilton beginning

"Busk ye, busk ye, my bonny, bonny Brith,
Busk ye, busk ye, my winsome Marrow!"—)

From Stirling castle we had seen

The mazy Forth unrivelled;

And trod the banks of Clyde, and Tay,

And with the Tweed had travelled;

And when we came to Clovenford,

Then said my "winsome Marrow,"

"Whate'er betide, we'll turn aside,

And see the Braes of Yarrow."

"Let Yarrow folk, frae Selkirk town,

Who have been buying, selling,

Go back to Yarrow, 'tis their own;

Each maiden to her dwelling!

On Yarrow's banks let herons feed.

Hares couch, and rabbits burrow!

But we will downward with the Tweed

Nor turn aside to Yarrow.

There's Galla Water, Leader Haughs,

Both lying right before us;

And Dryborough, where with chiming
Tweed

The lintwhites sing in chorus;

There's pleasant Tiviot-dale, a land

Made blithe with plough and narrow

Why throw away a needful day?

To go in search of Yarrow?

What's Yarrow but a river bare,

That glides the dark hills under?

There are a thousand such elsewhere

As worthy of your wonder."

—Strange words they seemed of slight

and scorn;

My True-love sighed for sorrow;

And looked me in the face, to think

I thus could speak of Yarrow!

"Oh! green," said I, "are Yarrow's

holms,

And sweet is Yarrow flowing!

Fair hangs the apple frae the rock!

But we will leave it growing.

O'er hilly path, and open Strath,

We'll wander Scotland thorough;

But, though so near, we will not turn

Into the dale of Yarrow.

Let bees and homebred kine partake

The sweets of Burnmill meadow;

The swan on still St. Mary's Lake

Float double, swan and shadow!

We will not see them; will not go,

To-day, nor yet to-morrow;

Enough if in our hearts we know

There's such a place as Yarrow.

Be Yarrow stream unseen, unknown!

It must, or we shall rue it:

We have a vision of our own;

Ah! why should we undo it?

The treasured dreams of times long past,

We'll keep them, winsome Marrow!

For when we're there, although 'tis

fair,

'Twill be another Yarrow!

If Care with freezing years should come,

And wandering seem but folly,—

Should we be loth to stir from home,

And yet be melancholy;

Should life be dull, and spirits low,

'Twill soothe us in our sorrow,

That earth has something yet to show.

The bonny holms of Yarrow!"

XIV

SONNET

IN THE PASS OF KILLICRANKY,

An invasion being expected, October, 1803

Six thousand veterans practised in

war's game,

Tried men, at Killicranky were arrayed

1 See Hamilton's Ballad as above.

Against an equal host that wore the
plaid.

Shepherds and herdsmen.—Like a whirl-
wind came

The Highlanders, the slaughter spread
like flame ;

And Garry, thundering down his moun-
tain road,

Was stopped, and could not breathe
beneath the load

Of the dead bodies.—'Twas a day of
shame

For them whom precept and the pedantry
Of cold mechanic battle do enslave.

O for a single hour of that Dundee,

Who on that day the word of onset gave !

Like conquest would the Men of England
see ;

And her Foes find a like inglorious grave.

XV

THE MATRON OF JEDBOROUGH AND HER HUSBAND

At Jedborough, my companion and I went into
private lodgings for a few days ; and the
following Verses were called forth by the
character and domestic situation of our
Hostess.

Age ! twine thy brows with fresh
spring flowers,

And call a train of laughing Hours ;

And bid them dance, and bid them sing ;

And thou, too, mingle in the ring !

Take to thy heart a new delight ;

If not, make merry in despite

That there is One who scorns thy power —

But dance ! for under Jedborough
Tower,

A Matron dwells who, though she
bears

The weight of more than seventy years,

Lives in the light of youthful glee,

And she will dance and sing with thee.

Nay ! start not at that Figure—
there !

Him who is rooted to his chair !

Look at him—look again ! for he

Hath long been of thy family.

With legs that move not, if they can.

And useless arms, a trunk of man.

He sits, and with a vacant eye ;

A sight to make a stranger sigh !

Deaf, drooping, that is now his doom :

His world is in this single room !

Is this a place for mirthful cheer ?

Can merry-making enter here ?

The joyous Woman is the Mate

Of him in that foggy estate !

He breathes a sallow, morose damp ;

But bright as Vesper shines her lamp ;

He is as mute as Jedborough Tower :

She found as it was of yore.

With all its bravery off ; in times
When all alive with merry chimes,
Upon a sun-bright morn of May,
It roused the Vale to holiday.

I praise thee, Matron ! and thy due

Is praise, heroic praise, and true !

With admiration I behold

Thy gladness unsubdued and bold :

Thy looks, thy gestures, all present

The picture of a life well spent :

This do I see ; and something more ;

A strength unthought of heretofore !

Delighted am I for thy sake ;

And yet a higher joy partake :

Our Human-nature throws away

Its second twilight, and looks gay ;

A land of promise and of pride

Unfolding, wide as life is wide.

Ah ! see her helpless Charge ! enclosed

With himself as seems, composed ;

To fear of loss, and hope of gain,

The strife of happiness and pain,

Utterly dead ! yet in the guise

Of little infants, when their eyes

Begin to follow to and fro

The persons that before them go,

He tracks her motions, quick or slow.

Her buoyant spirit can prevail

Where common cheerfulness would fail ;

She strikes upon him with the heat

Of July suns ; he feels it sweet ;

An animal delight though dim !

'Tis all that now remains for him.

The more I looked, I wondered more—

And, while I scanned them o'er and o'er,

Some inward trouble suddenly

Broke from the Matron's strong black

eye—

A remnant of uneasy light,

A flash of something over-bright !

Nor long this mystery did detain

My thoughts ;—she told in pensive

strain

That she had borne a heavy yoke,

Been stricken by a twofold stroke :

Ill health of body ; and had pined

Beneath worse ailments of the mind.

So be it !—but let praise ascend

To Him who is our lord and friend !

Who from disease and suffering

Hath called for thee a second spring ;

Repaid thee for that sore distress

By no untimely joyousness ;

Which makes of thine a blissful state ;

And cheers thy melancholy Mate !

XVI

FLY, some kind Harbinger, to Grasmere-
dale !

Say that we come, and come by this
day's light !

Fly upon swiftest wing round field and
height,
But chiefly let one Cottage hear the
tale;

There let a mystery of joy prevail,
The kitten frolic, like a gamesome sprite,
And Rover whine, as at a second sight
Of near-approaching good that shall
not fail:

And from that Infant's face let joy
appear:

Yea, let our Mary's one companion
child—

That hath her six weeks' solifude
beguiled

With intimations manifold and dear,
While we have wandered over wood and
wild—

Smile on his Mother now with bolder
[cheer.

XVII

THE BLIND HIGHLAND BOY

A TALE TOLD BY THE FIRE-SIDE, AFTER
RETURNING TO THE VALE OF GRAS-
MERE

Now we are tired of boisterous joy,
Have romped enough, my little Boy!
Jane hangs her head upon my breast,
And you shall bring your stool and rest;
This corner is your own.

There! take your seat, and let me see
That you can listen quietly:
And, as I promised, I will tell
That strange adventure which befel
A poor blind Highland Boy.

A *Highland Boy*!—why call him so?
Because, my Darlings, ye must know
That, under hills which rise like towers,
Far higher hills than these of ours!
He from his birth had lived.

He ne'er had seen one earthly sight
The sun, the day; the stars, the night,
Or tree, or butterfly, or flower,
Or fish in stream, or bird in bower,
Or woman, man, or child.

And yet he neither drooped nor pined,
Nor had a melancholy mind;
For God took pity on the Boy,
And was his friend; and gave him joy
Of which we nothing know.

His Mother, too, no doubt, above
Her other children him did love:
For, was she here, or was she there,
She thought of him with constant care,
And more than mother's love.

And proud she was of heart, when clad
In crimson stockings, tartan plaid,
And bonnet with a feather gay,
To Kirk be on the sabbath day
Went hand in hand with her.

A dog too, had he; not for need,
But one to play with and to feed;
Which would have led him, if bereft
Of company or friends, and left
Without a better guide.

And then the bagpipes he could blow—
And thus from house to house would
go,
And all were pleased to hear and see,
For none made sweeter melody
Than did the poor blind Boy.

Yet he had many a restless dream:
Both when he heard the eagles scream,
And when he heard the torrents roar,
And heard the water beat the shore
Near which their cottage stood.

Beside a lake their cottage stood,
Not small like ours, a peaceful flood;
But one of mighty size, and strange,
That, rough or smooth, is full of change,
And stirring in its bed

For to this lake, by night and day,
The great Sea-water finds its way
Through long, long windings of the hills
And drinks up all the pretty rills
And rivers large and strong:

Then hurries back the road it came—
Returns, on errand still the same;
This did it when the earth was new;
And this for evermore will do,
As long as earth shall last.

And, with the coming of the tide,
Come boats and ships that safely ride
Between the woods and lofty rocks;
And to the shepherds with their flocks
Bring tales of distant lands.

And of those tales, whate'er they were,
The blind Boy always had his share;
Whether of mighty towns, or vales
With warmer suns and softer gales,
Or wonders of the Deep.

Yet more it pleased him, more it stirred,
When from the water-side he heard
The shouting, and the jolly cheers;
The bustle of the mariners
In stillness or in storm.

But what do his desires avail?
For He must never handle sail;
Nor mount the mast, nor row, nor float
In sailor's ship, or fisher's boat,
Upon the rocking waves.

His Mother often thought, and said,
What sin would be upon her head
If she should suffer this: "My Son,
Whate'er you do, leave this undone;
The danger is so great"

Thus lived he by Loch Leven's side
Still sounding with the sounding tide,
And heard the billows leap and dance,
Without a shadow of mischance,
Till he was ten years old.

When one day (and now mark me well,
Ye soon shall know how this befel)
He in a vessel of his own,
On the swift flood is hurrying down,
Down to the mighty Sea.

In such a vessel never more
May human creature leave the shore !
If this or that way he should stir,
Woe to the poor blind Mariner !
For death will be his doom.

But say what bears him ?—Ye have seen
The Indian's bow, his arrows keen,
Rare beasts, and birds with plumage
bright ;
Gifts which, for wonder or delight,
Are brought in ships from far.

Such gifts had those seafaring men
Spread round that haven in the glen ;
Each hut, perchance, might have its
own ;

And to the Boy they all were known—
He knew and prized them all.

The rarest was a Turtle-shell
Which he, poor Child, had studied well ;
A shell of ample size, and light
As the pearly ear of Amphitrite,
That sportive dolphins drew.

And, as a Coracle that braves
On Vaga's breast the fretful waves,
This shell upon the deep would swim,
And gaily lift its fearless brim
Above the tossing surge.

And this the little blind Boy knew
And he a story strange yet true
Had heard, how in a shell like this
An English Boy, O thought of bliss !
Had stoutly launched from shore ;

Launched from the margin of a bay
Among the Indian isles, where lay
His father's ship, and had sailed far—
To join that gallant ship of war,
In his delightful shell.

Our Highland Boy oft visited
The house that held this prize ; and, led
By choice or chance, did thither come
One day when no one was at home,
And found the door unbarred.

While there he sat, alone and blind,
That story flashed upon his mind :—
A bold thought roused him, and he took
The shell from out its secret nook,
And bore it on his head.

He launched his vessel,—and in pride
Of spirit, from Loch Leven's side,
Stepped into it—his thoughts all free
As the light breezes that with glee
Sang through the adventurer's
hair.

A while he stood upon his feet ;
He felt the motion—took his seat ;
Still better pleased as more and more
The tide retreated from the shore,
And sucked, and sucked him in.

And there he is in face of Heaven,
How rapidly the Child is driven !
The fourth part of a mile, I ween,
He thus had gone, ere he was seen
By any human eye.

But when he was first seen, oh me
What shrieking and what misery !
For many saw ; among the rest
His Mother, she who loved him best,
She saw her poor blind Boy.

But for the child, the sightless Boy,
It is the triumph of his joy !
The bravest traveller in halloo,
Mounting as if to reach the moon,
Was never half so blessed.

And let him, let him go his way,
Alone, and innocent, and gay !
For, if good Angels love to wait
On the forlorn unfortunate,
This Child will take no harm.

But now the passionate lament,
Which from the crowd on shore was sent
The cries which broke from old and
young
In Gaelic, or the English tongue,
Are stifled—all is still.

And quickly with a silent crew
A boat is ready to pursue ;
And from the shore their course they
take,
And swiftly down the running lake
They follow the blind Boy.

But soon they move with softer pace ;
So have ye seen the fowler chase
On Grasmere's clear unruddied breast
A youngling of the wild-duck's nest
With deftly-lifted oar ;

Or as the wily sailors crept
To seize (while on the Deep it slept)
The hapless creature which did dwell
Erewhile within the dancing shel,
They steal upon their prey.

With sound the least that can be made,
They follow, more and more afraid,
More cautious as they draw more near ;
But in his darkness he can hear,
And guesses their intent.

"*Lei-gha—Lei-gha*"—he then cried out,
 "*Lei-gha—Lei-gha*"—with eager shout;
 Thus did he cry, and thus did pray,
 And what he meant was, "Keep away,
 And leave me to myself!"

Alas! and when he felt their hands—
 You've often heard of magic wands,
 That with a motion overthrow
 A palace of the proudest show,
 Or melt it into air:

So all his dreams— that inward light
 With which his soul had shone so bright—
 All vanished;—'twas a heart-felt cross
 To him, a heavy, bitter loss,
 As he had ever known.

But hark! a gratulating voice,
 With which the very hills rejoice:
 'Tis from the crowd, who tremblingly
 Have watched the event, and now can see
 That he is safe at last.

And then, when he was brought to land,
 Full sure they were a happy band,
 Which, gathering round, did on the banks
 Of that great Water give God thanks,
 And welcomed the poor Child.

And in the general joy of heart
 The blind Boy's little dog took part;
 He leapt about, and oft did kiss
 His master's hands in sign of bliss,
 With sound like lamentation.

But most of all, his Mother dear,
 She who had fainted with her fear,
 Rejoiced when waking she espies
 The Child; when she can trust her eyes,
 And touches the blind Boy.

She led him home, and wept amain,
 When he was in the house again:
 Tears flowed in torrents from her eyes;
 She kissed him—how could she chastise?
 She was too happy far.

Thus, after he had fondly braved
 The perilous Deep, the Boy was saved;
 And, though his fancies had been wild,
 Yet he was pleased and reconciled
 To live in peace on shore.

And in the lonely Highland dell
 Still do they keep the Turtle-shell;
 And long the story will repeat
 Of the Blind boy's adventurous feat,
 And how he was preserved.

Note.—It is recorded in Dampier's Voyages, that a boy, son of the captain of a Man-of-War, seated himself in a Turtle-shell, and floated in it from the shore to his father's ship, which lay at anchor at the distance of half a mile. In deference to the opinion of a friend, I have substituted such a shell for the less elegant vessel in which my blind Voyager did actually entrust himself to the dangerous current of Loch Leven, as was related to me by an eye-witness.

MEMORIALS OF A TOUR IN SCOTLAND

1814

I

SUGGESTED BY A BEAUTIFUL RUIN UPON
 ONE OF THE ISLANDS OF LOCH LO-
 MOND, A PLACE CHOSEN FOR THE
 RETREAT OF A SOLITARY INDI-
 VIDUAL, FROM WHOM THIS HABITA-
 TION ACQUIRED THE NAME OF

THE BROWNIE'S CELL

I

To barren heath, bleak moor, and
 quaking fen,
 Or depth of labyrinthine glen;
 Or into trackless forest set
 With trees, whose lofty umbrage met;
 World-wearied Men withdrew of yore;
 (Penance their trust, and prayer their
 store.)
 And in the wilderness were bound
 To such apartments as they found;
 Or with a new ambition raised;
 That God might suitably be praised.

II

High lodged the Warrior, like a bird
 of prey;
 Or where broad waters round him lay:
 But this wild Ruin is no ghost
 Of his devices—buried, lost!
 Within this little lonely isle
 There stood a consecrated Pile;
 Where tapers burned, and mass was
 sung,
 For them whose timid Spirits clung
 To mortal succour, though the tomb
 Had fixed, for ever fixed, their doom!

III

Upon those servants of another world
 When madding Power her bolts had
 hurled,
 Their hammer shook,—it fell,
 And perished, save one narrow cell;
 Whither, at length, a Wretch retired
 Who neither grovelled nor aspired;

He, struggling in the net of pride,
The future scorned, the past defied;
Still tempering, from the unguilty forge
Of vain conceit, an iron scourge!

IV

Proud Remnant was he of a fearless
Race,

Who stood and flourished face to face
With their perennial hills;—but Crime,
Hastening the stern decrees of Time,
Brought low a Power, which from its
home

Burst, when repose grew wearisome;
And, taking impulse from the sword,
And, mocking its own mighty word,
Had found, in ravage widely dealt,
Its warfare's bourn, its travel's belt!

V

All, all were dispossessed, save him
whose smile

Shot lightning through this lonely Isle!
No right had he but what he made
To this small spot, his leafy shade;
But the ground lay within that ring
To which he only dared to cling;
Renouncing here, as worse than dead,
The craven few who bowed the head
Beneath the change; who heard a claim
How loud! yet lived in peace with
shame.

VI

From year to year this shaggy Mortal
went

(So seemed it) down a strange descent:
Till they, who saw his outward frame,
Fixed on him an unhallowed name;
Him, free from all malicious taint,
And guiding, like the Patmos Saint,
A pen unwearied—to indite,
In his lone Isle, the dreams of night;
Impassioned dreams, that strove to span
The faded glories of his Clan!

VII

Suns that through blood their western
harbour sought,
And stars that in their courses fought:
Towers rent, winds combating with
woods,

Lands deluged by unbridled floods;
And beast and bird that from the spell
Of sleep took import terrible;—
These types mysterious (if the show
Of battle and the routed foe
Had failed) would furnish an array
Of matter for the dawning day!

VIII

How disappeared He? Ask the new
and toad,
Inheritors of his abode;

W.P.

The otter crouching undisturbed,
In her dank cleft;—but be thou curbed,
O froward Fancy! 'mid a scene
Of aspect winning and serene;
For those offensive creatures shun
The inquisition of the sun!
And in this region flowers delight,
And all is lovely to the sight.

IX

Spring finds not here a melancholy
breast,

When she applies her annual test
To dead and living; when her breath
Quickens, as now, the withered heath:—
Nor flaunting Summer—when he throws
His soul into the briar-rose;
Or calls the lily from her sleep
Prolonged beneath the bordering deep;
Nor Autumn, when the viewless wren
Is warbling near the BROWNIE'S DEN.

X

Wild Relique! beauteous as the chosen
spot

In Nysa's isle, the embellished grot;
Whither, by care of Libyan Jove,
(High Servant of paternal Love)
Young Bacchus was conveyed—to lie
Safe from his step-dame Rhea's eye;
Where bud, and bloom, and fruitage,
glowed,

Close-crowding round the infant-god;
All colours,—and the liveliest streak
A foil to his celestial cheek!

II

COMPOSED AT CORA LINN

IN SIGHT OF WALLACE'S TOWER

“—How Wallace fought for Scotland, left the
name

Of Wallace to be found, like a wild flower,
All over his dear Country; left the deeds
Of Wallace, like a family of ghosts,
To people the steep rocks and river banks,
Her natural sanctuaries with a local soul
Of independence and stern liberty.”—MS.

LORD of the vale! astounding Flood;
The dullest leaf in this thick wood
Quakes—conscious of thy power;
The caves reply with hollow moan;
And vibrates, to its central stone,
Yon time-cemented Tower!

And yet how fair the rural scene!
For thou, O Clyde, hast ever been
Beneficent as strong;
Pleased in refreshing dews to steep
The little trembling flowers that peep
Thy shelving rocks among.

Hence all who love their country, love
To look on thee—delight to rove
Where they thy voice can hear;

R

And, to the patriot-warrior's Shade,
Lord of the vale ! to Heroes laid
In dust, that voice is dear !

Along thy banks, at dead of night
Sweeps visibly the Wallace Wight ;
Or stands, in warlike vest,
Aloft, beneath the moon's pale beam,
A Champion worthy of the stream,
Yon grey tower's living crest !

But clouds and envious darkness hide—
A Form not doubtfully descried :—
Their transient mission o'er,
O say to what blind region flee
These Shapes of awful phantasy ?
To what untrodden shore ?

Less than divine command they spurn ;
But this we from the mountains learn,
And this the valleys show ;
That never will they deign to hold
Communion where the heart is cold
To human weal and woe.

The man of abject soul in vain
Shall walk the Marathonian plain ;
Or thrid the shadowy gloom,
That still invests the guardin Pass,
Where stood, sublime, Leonidas
Devoted to the tomb.

And let no Slave his head incline,
Or kneel, before the votive shrine
By Uri's lake, where Tell
Leapt, from his storm-vest boat, to
land,

Heaven's Instrument, for by his hand
That day the Tyrant fell.

III EFFUSION

IN THE PLEASURE-GROUND ON THE
BANKS OF THE BRAN, NEAR DUNKELD

"The waterfall, by a loud roaring, warned us when we must expect it. We were first, however, conducted into a small apartment, where the Gardener desired us to look at a picture of Ossian, which, while he was telling the history of the young Artist who executed the work, disappeared, parting in the middle—flying asunder as by the touch of magic:—and lo ! we are at the entrance of a splendid apartment, which was almost dizzy and alive with waterfalls, that tumbled in all directions : the great cascade, opposite the window, which faced us, being reflected in innumerable mirrors upon the ceiling and against the walls."—*Extract from the Journal of my Fellow Traveller.*

What He—who, mid the kindred throng
Of Heroes that inspired his song,
Doth yet frequent the hill of storms.
The stars dim-twinkling through their
forms !

What ! Ossian here—a painted Thrall,
Mute fixture on a stuccoed wall ;

To serve—an unsuspected screech
For show that must not yet be seen ;
And, when the moment comes, to part
And vanish by mysterious art ;
Head, harp, and body, split asunder,
For ingress to a world of wonder ;
A gay saloon, with waters dancing
Upon the sight wherever glancing ;
One loud cascade in front, and lo !
A thousand like it, white as snow—
Streams on the walls, and torrent-foam
As active round the hollow dome,
Illusive cataracts ! of their terrors
Not stripped, nor voiceless in the mirrors,
That catch the pageant from the flood
Thundering adown a rocky wood.
What pains to dazzle and confound !
What strife of colour, shape and sound
In this quaint medley, that might seem
Expelled out of a sick man's dream !
Strange scene, fantastic and uneasy
As ever made a maniac dizzy,
When disenchanting from the mood
That loves on sullen thoughts to brood !

O Nature—in thy changeful visions,
Through all thy most abrupt transitions
Smooth, graceful, tender, or sublime—
Ever averse to Pantomime,
Thou neither do they know nor us
Thy servants, who can trifle thus ;
Else verily the sober powers
Of rock that frowns, and stream that
roars,

Exalted by congenial sway
Of Spirits, and the undying Lay,
And Names that moulder not away,
Had wakened some redeeming thought
More worthy of this favoured Spot ;
Recalled some feeling—to set free
The Bard from such indignity !

The Effigies¹ of a valiant Wight
I once beheld, a Templar Knight ;
Not prostrate, not like those that rest
On tombs, with palms together prest,
But sculptured out of living stone,
And standing upright and alone,
Both hands with rival energy
Employed in setting his sword free
From its dull sheath—stern sentinel
Intent to guard St. Robert's cell ;
As if with memory of the affray
Far distant, when, as legends say,
The Monks of Fountain's thronged to
force

From its dear home the Hermit's
corse,

That in their keeping it might lie,
To crown their abbey's sanctity.
So had ~~we~~ rushed into the grove
Of sense despoiled, a world forgot,

¹ On the banks of the River Nid, near Knaresborough.

And turn him from his loved retreat,
Where altar-stone and rock-hewn seat
Still hint that quiet best is found,
Even by the *Living*, under ground;
But a bold Knight, the selfish aim
Defeating, put the Monks to shame,
There where you see his Image stand
Bare to the sky, with threatening brand
Which lingering Nid is proud to show
Reflected in the pool below.

Thus, like the men of earliest days,
Our sires set forth their grateful praise;
Uncouth the workmanship, and rude!
But, nursed in mountain solitude,
Might some aspiring artist dare
To seize what'er, through misty air,
A ghost, by glimpses, may present
Of imitable lineament,
And give the phantom an array
That less should scorn the abandoned
lay:

Then let him hew with patient stroke
An Ossian out of mural rock,
And leave the figurative Man—
Upon thy margin, roaring Bran!—
Fixed, like the Templar of the steep,
An everlasting watch to keep;
With local sanctities in trust,
More precious than a hermit's dust;
And virtues through the mass infused,
Which old idolatry abused.

What though the Granite would deny
All fervour to the sightless eye;
And touch from rising suns in vain
Solicits a Memnonian strain;
Yet, in some fit of anger sharp,
The wind might force the deep-grooved
harp

To utter melancholy moans
Not unconnected with the tones
Of soul-sick flesh and weary bones:
While grove and river notes would lead,
Less deeply sad, with these to blend!

Vain pleasures of luxurious life,
For ever with yourselves at strife;
Through town and country both deranged
By affectations interchanged,
And all the perishable gauds
That heaven-deserted man applauds;
When will your hapless patrons learn
To watch and ponder—to discern
The freshness, the everlasting youth,
Of admiration sprung from truth;
From beauty infinitely growing
Upon a mind with love o'erflowing—
To sound the depths of every Art
That seeks its wisdom through the heart?

Thus (where the inclusive Pile, ill-
graced
With baubles of theatric taste,

O'erlooks the torrent breathing showers
On motley bands of alien flowers
In stiff confusion set or sown,
Till Nature cannot find her own,
Or keep a remnant of the sod
(Which Caledonian Heroes trod)
I mused, and, thirsting for redress,
Recoiled into the wilderness.

IV

• • YARROW VISITED

SEPTEMBER, 1814

(See page 236)

AND is this—Yarrow?—*This* the Stream
Of which my fancy cherished,
So faithfully, a waking dream?
An image that hath perished!
O that some Minstrel's harp were near,
To utter notes of gladness,
And chase this silence from the air,
That fills my heart with sadness!

Yet why?—a silvery current flows
With uncontrolled meanderings;
Nor have these eyes by greener hills
Been soothed, in all my wanderings.
And, through her depths, Saint Mary's
Lake

Is visibly delighted;
For not a feature of those hills
Is in the mirror slighted.

A blue sky bends o'er Yarrow vale,
Save where that pearly whiteness
Is round the rising sun diffused,
A tender hazy brightness;
Mild dawn of promise! that excludes
All profitless dejection;
Though not unwilling here to admit
A pensive recollection.

Where was it that the famous Flower
Of Yarrow Vale lay bleeding?
His bed perchance was yon smooth
mound

On which the herd is feeding:
And haply from this crystal pool,
Now peaceful as the morning,
The Water-wraith ascended thrice—
And gave his doleful warning.

Delicious is the Lay that sings
The haunts of happy Lovers,
The path that leads them to the grove,
The leafy grove that covers:
And Pity sanctifies the Verse
That paints, by strength of sorrow,
The unconquerable strength of love;
Bear witness, rueful Yarrow!

But thou, that didst appear so fair
To Fond imagination,
Dost rival in the light of day
Her delicate creation:

Meek loveliness is round thee spread,
A softness still and holy;
The grace of forest charms decayed,
And pastoral melancholy.

That region left, the vale unfolds
Rich groves of lofty stature,
With Yarrow winding through the pomp
Of cultivated nature;
And, rising from those lofty groves,
Behold a Ruin hoary!
The shattered front of Newark's Towers,
Renowned in Border story.

Fair scenes for childhood's opening
For sportive youth to stray in;
For manhood to enjoy his strength;
And age to wear away in!
Yon cottage seems a bower of bliss,
A covert for protection
Of tender thoughts, that nestle there—
The brood of chaste affection.

How sweet, on this autumnal day,
The wild-wood fruits to gather,

And on my True-love's forehead plant
A crest of blooming heather!
And what if I enwreathed my own!
'Twere no offence to reason;
The sober Hills thus deck their brows
To meet the wintry season.

I see—but not by sight alone,
Loved-Yarrow, have I won thee;
A ray of fancy still survives—
Her sunshine plays upon thee!
Thy ever-youthful waters keep
A course of lively pleasure;
And gladsome notes my lips can breathe,
Accordant to the measure.

The vapours linger round the Heights,
They melt, and soon must vanish;
One hour is theirs, nor more is mine—
Sad thought, which I would banish,
But that I know, where'er I go,
Thy genuine image, Yarrow!
Will dwell with me—to heighten joy,
And cheer my mind in sorrow.

POEMS DEDICATED TO NATIONAL INDEPENDENCE AND LIBERTY

PART I

I

COMPOSED BY THE SEA-SIDE, NEAR
CALAIS, AUGUST, 1802

FAIR Star of evening. Splendour of the
west, [brink
Star of my Country!—on the horizon's
Thou hangest, stooping, as might seem,
to sink
On England's bosom: yet well pleased
to rest,
Meanwhile, and be to her a glorious
crest
Conspicuous to the Nations. Thou, I
think,
Should'st be my Country's emblem;
and should'st wink,
Bright Star! with laughter on her ban-
ners, drest
In thy fresh beauty. There! that
dusky spot
Beneath thee, that is England: there she
lies.
Blessings be on you both! one hope, one
lot.
One life, one glory!—I, with many a
fear
For my dear Country, many heartfelt
sighs, [here,
Among men who do not love her, linger

II

CALAIS, AUGUST, 1802

Is it a reed that's shaken by the wind,
Or what is it that ye go forth to see?
Lords, lawyers, statesmen, squires of
low degree,
Men known, and men unknown, sick,
lame, and blind, [kind,
Post forward all, like creatures of one
With first-fruit offerings crowd to bend
the knee
In France, before the new-born Majesty.
'Tis ever thus. Ye men of prostrate
mind,
A seemly reverence may be paid to
power;
But that's a loyal virtue, never sown
In haste, nor springing with a transient
shower:
When truth, when sense, when liberty
were flown,
What hardship had it been to wait an
hour? [prone to
Shame on you, feeble Heads, to slavery

III

Composed near Calais, on the road leading to
Arras, August 7, 1802
JONES! as from Calais southward you
and I

Went, pacing side by side, this public
Way

Streamed with the pomp of a too-credulous day,¹

When "faith" was pledged to new-born Liberty:

A homeless sound of joy was in the sky:
From hour to hour the antiquated Earth,
Beat like the heart of Man: songs, gailands, mirth,

Banners, and happy faces, far and nigh!
And now, sole register that these things were,

Two solitary greetings have I heard,
"Good morrow, Citizen!" a hollow word,
As if a dead man spake it! Yet despair
Touches me not, though pensive as a bird

Whose vernal coverts winter hath laid bare.²

IV

1801

I GRIEVED for Buonaparte, with a vain
And an unthinking grief! The tenderest mood

Of that Man's mind—what can it be?
what food

Fed his first hopes? what knowledge
could he gain?

'Tis not in battles that from youth we
train

The Governor who must be wise and
good,

And temper with the sternness of the
brain

Thoughts motherly, and meek as woman-
hood.

Wisdom doth live with children round
her knees:

Books, leisure, perfect freedom, and the
talk

Man holds with week-day man in the
hourly walk

Of the mind's business: these are the
degrees

By which true Sway doth mount; this
is the stalk

True Power doth grow on; and her
rights are these.

V

CALAIS, AUGUST 15, 1802

FESTIVALS have I seen that were no
names:

This is young Buonaparte's natal day,
And his is henceforth an established

sway—
Consul for life. With worship France pro-
claims

Her approbation, and with pomps and
games.

July 14, 1799.

See Note.

Heaven grant that other Cities may be
gay!

Calais is not: and I have bent my way
To the sea-coast, noting that each man
frames

His business as he likes. Far other
show

My youth here witnessed, in a prouder
time:

The senselessness of joy was then sub-
[lime!]
Happy is he, who, caring not for Pope,

Consul, or King, can sound himself to
know

The destiny of Man, and live in hope.

VI

ON THE EXTINCTION OF THE VENETIAN
REPUBLIC

ONCE did She hold the gorgeous east in
fee;

And was the safeguard of the west: 'the
worth

Of Venice did not fall below her birth,
Venice, the eldest Child of Liberty.

She was a maiden City, bright and free;
No guile seduced, no force could violate;

And, when she took unto herself a Mate,
She must espouse the everlasting Sea.

And what if she had seen those glories
fade, [decay:

Those titles vanish, and that strength
Yet shall some tribute of regret be paid

When her long life hath reached its
final day:

Men are we, and must grieve when even
the Shade [away.

Of that which once was great, is passed

VII

THE KING OF SWEDEN

THE Voice of song from distant lands
shall call

To, that great King; shall hail the
crowned Youth [Truth,

Who, taking counsel of unbending
By one example hath set forth to all

How they with dignity may stand; or
fall,

If fall they must. Now, whither doth it
tend?

And what to him and his shall be the
end? [appal

That thought is one which neither can
Nor cheer him; for the illustrious

Swede hath done
The thing which ought to be; is raised
above

All consequences: work he hath begun
Of fortitude, and piety, and love,

Which all his glorious ancestors approve:
The heroes bless him, him their rightful

son.³

See Note.

VIII

TO TOUSSAINT L'OUVERTURE

TOUSSAINT, the most unhappy man of men!

Whether the whistling Rustic tend his plough

Within thy hearing, or thy head be now
Pillowed in some deep dungeon's ear-
less den ;—

O miserable Chieftain ! where and when
Wilt thou find patience ? Yet die not ;
do thou

Wear rather in thy bonds a cheerful
brow :

Though fallen thyself, never to rise
again,

Live, and take comfort. Thou hast
left behind

Powers that will work for thee ; air,
earth, and skies .

There's not a breathing of the common
wind

That will forget thee : thou hast great
allies :

Thy friends are exultations, agonies,
And love, and man's unconquerable
mind.

IX

SEPTEMBER 1, 1802

Among the capricious acts of tyranny that dis-
graced those times was the chasing of all
Negroes from France by decree of the govern-
ment : we had a fellow-passenger who was
one of the expelled.

We had a female Passenger who came
From Calais with us, spotless in array,—

A white-robed Negro, like a lady gay,
Yet downcast as a woman, fearing

blame ;
Meek, destitute, as seemed, of hope or
aim

She sate, from notice turning not away,
But on all proffered intercourse did lay

A weight of languid speech, or to the
same

No sign of answer made by word or face :
Yet still her eyes retained their tropic fire

That, burning independent of the mind,
Joined with the lustre of her rich attire

To mock the Outcast—O ye Heavens, be
kind !

And feel, thou Earth, for this afflicted
Race !

X

COMPOSED IN THE VALLEY NEAR DOVER,
ON THE DAY OF LANDING

HERE, on our native soil, we breathe
once more.

The cock that crows, the smoke that
curls, that sound

Of bells ;—those boys who in yon
meadow-ground

In white-sleeved shirts are playing,
and the roar

Of the waves breaking on the chalky
shore ;—

All, all are English. Oft have I looked
round

With joy in Kent's green vales ; but
never found

Myself so satisfied in heart before.
Europe is yet in bonds ; but let that

pass,
Thought for another moment. Thou art
free.

My Country ! and 'tis joy enough and
pride

For one hour's perfect bliss, to tread
the grass

Of England once again, and hear and see,
With such a dear Companion at my

side.

XI

SEPTEMBER, 1802. NEAR DOVER,

INLAND, within a hollow vale, I stood ;
And saw, while sea was calm and air

was clear,
The coast of France—the coast of France
how near !

Drawn almost into frightful neighbour-
hood.

I shrank ; for verily the barrier flood
Was like a lake, or river bright and fair.

A span of waters ; yet what power is
there !

What mightiness for evil and for good !
Even so doth God protect us if we be

Virtuous and wise. Winds blow, and
waters roll,

Strength to the brave, and Power, and
Deity ;

Yet in themselves are nothing ! One
degree

Spake laws to them, and said that by
the soul

Only, the Nations shall be great and free.

XII

THOUGHT OF A BRITON ON THE SUBJU-
GATION OF SWITZERLAND .

Two Voices are there : one is of the sea,
One of the mountains ; each a mighty

Voice :
In both from age to age thou didst re-
joice,

They were thy chosen music, Liberty !
There came a Tyrant, and with holy glee

Thou fought'st against him ; but hast
vainly striven :

Thou from thy Alpine holds at length
art driven,

Where not a torrent murmurs heard by
thee.

Of one deep bliss thine ear hath been
bereft :

Then cleave, O cleave to that which
still is left ;
For, high-souled Maid, what sorrow
would it be
That Mountain floods should thunder as
before,
And Ocean bellow from his rocky shore,
And neither awful Voice be heard by
thee !

XIII

WRITTEN IN LONDON, SEPTEMBER, 1802

O FRIEND ! I know not which way I
must look

For comfort, being, as I am, oppress'd, -
To think that now our life is only drest
For show ; mean handy-work of crafts-
man, cook,

Or groom !—We must run gattering
like a brook

In the open sunshine, or we are unblest ;
The wealthiest man among us is the best ;
No grandeur now in nature or in book
Delights us. Rapine, avarice, expense,
This is idolatry ; and these we adore :
Plain living and high thinking are no
more :

The homely beauty of the good old
cause

Is gone ; our peace, our fearful innocence,
And pure religion breathing household
laws.

XIV

LONDON, 1802

MILTON ! thou should'st be living at
this hour :

England hath need of thee : she is a fen
Of stagnant waters : altar, sword, and
pen,
Fireside, the heroic wealth of hall and
bower,

Have forfeited their ancient English
dower [men ;
Of inward happiness. We are selfish
Oh ! raise us up, return to us again :
And give us manners, virtue, freedom,
power.

Thy soul was like a star, and dwelt
apart ;

Thou hadst a voice whose sound was
like the sea :

Pure as the naked heavens, majestic, free,
So didst thou travel on life's common
way,

In cheerful godliness ; and yet thy heart
The lowliest duties on herself did lay.

XV

GREAT men have been, among us ;
hands that penned, among us ;
And tongues that uttered wisdom—
better none :

The later Sidney, Marvel, Harrington,
Young Vane, and others who called Mil-
ton friend.

These moralists could act and compre-
hend :

They knew how genuine glory was put
on ;

Taught us how rightfully a nation shone
In splendour : what strength was, that
would not bend

But in magnanimous meekness. France,
'tis strange,

Hath brought forth no such souls as we
had then.

Perpetual emptiness ! unceasing change !
No single volume paramount, no code,
No master spirit, no determined road ;
But equally a want of books and men !

XVI

It is not to be thought of that the Flood
Of British freedom, which, to the open
sea [quity

Of the world's praise, from dark anti-
llath flowed, " with pomp of waters, un-
withstood."

Roused though it be full often to a mood
Which spurns the check of salutary
bands,

That this most famous Stream in bogs
and sands

Should perish ; and to evil and to good
Be lost for ever. In our halls is hung

Armoury of the invincible Knights of
old : [tongue

We must be free or die, who speak the
That Shakspeare spake ; the faith and
morals hold

Which Milton held.—In every thing
we are sprung [fold.

Of Earth's first blood, have titles mani-

XVII

WHEN I have borne in memory what
has tamed

Great Nations, how ennobling thoughts
depart

When men change swords for ledgers,
and desert

The student's bower for gold, some
fears unnamed

I had, my Country !—am I to be blamed ?
Now, when I think of thee, and what
thou art,

Verily, in the bottom of my heart,
Of those unfilial fears I am ashamed.

For dearly must we prize thee ; we who
find

In thee a bulwark for the cause of men ;
And I by my affection was beguiled :

What wonder if a Poet now and then,
Among the many movements of his mind,

Felt for thee as a lover or a child !

XVIII

OCTOBER, 1803

ONE might believe that natural miseries
 Had blasted France, and made of it
 a land
 Unfit for men; and that in one great
 band
 Her sons were bursting forth, to dwell
 at ease.
 But 'tis a chosen soil, where sun and
 breeze
 Shed gentle favours: rural works are
 there,
 And ordinary business without care:
 Spot rich in all things that can soothe
 and please!
 How piteous then that there should be
 such dearth
 Of knowledge; that whole myriads
 should unite
 To work against themselves such fell
 despite:
 Should come in phrensy and in drunken
 mirth,
 Impatient to put out the only light
 Of Liberty that yet remains on earth!

XIX

THERE is a bondage worse, far worse,
 to bear
 Than his who breathes, by roof, and
 floor, and wall,
 Pent in, a Tyrant's solitary Thrall:
 'Tis his who walks about in the open air,
 One of a Nation who, henceforth, must
 wear
 Their fetters in their souls. For who
 could be, [free
 Who, even the best, in such condition,
 From self-reproach, reproach that he
 must share
 With Human-nature? Never be it ours
 To see the sun how brightly it will
 shine,
 And know that noble feelings, manly
 powers,
 Instead of gathering strength, must
 droop and pine;
 And earth with all her pleasant fruits
 and flowers
 Fade, and participate in man's decline.

XX

OCTOBER, 1803

THESE times strike monied worldlings
 with dismay:
 Even rich men, brave by nature, taint
 the air
 With words of apprehension and despair:
 While tens of thousands, thinking on
 the affray,
 Men unto whom sufficient for the day

And minds not stinted or untill'd are
 given,
 Sound, healthy, children of the God of
 heaven,
 Are cheerful as the rising sun in May.
 What do we gather hence but firmer
 faith
 That every gift of noble origin
 Is breathed upon by Hope's perpetual
 breath;
 That virtue and the faculties within
 Are vital,—and that riches are akin
 To fear, to change, to cowardice, and
 death?

XXI

ENGLAND! the time is come when thou
 should'st wean
 Thy heart from its emasculating food;
 The truth should now be better under-
 stood; [seen
 Old things have been unsettled; we have
 Fair seed-time, better harvest might
 have been
 Bht for thy trespasses, and, at this day,
 If for Greece, Egypt, India, Africa,
 Aught good were destined, thou would'st
 step between
 England! all nations in this charge
 agree: [hate,
 But worse, more ignorant in love and
 far—far more abject, is thine Enemy:
 Therefore the wise pray for thee, though
 the freight
 Of thy offences be a heavy weight:
 Oh grief that Earth's best hopes rest
 all with Thee!

XXII

OCTOBER, 1803

WHEN, looking on the present face of
 things,
 I see one Man, of men the meanest too;
 Raised up to sway the world, to do,
 undo,
 With mighty Nations for his underlings,
 The great events with which old story
 rings
 Seem vain and hollow; I find nothing
 great:
 Nothing is left which I can venerate;
 So that a doubt almost within me
 springs
 Of Providence, such emptiness at length
 Seems at the heart of all things. But,
 Great God!
 I measure back the steps which I have
 trod;
 And tremble, seeing whence proceeds
 the strength
 Of such poor instruments, with thoughts
 sublime
 I tremble at the sorrow of the time.

XXIII

TO THE MEN OF KENT. OCTOBER, 1803
 VANGUARD of Liberty, ye men of Kent,
 Ye children of a Soil that doth advance
 Her haughty brow against the coast of
 France,
 Now is the time to prove your hardi-
 ment!
 To France be words of invitation sent!
 They from their fields can see the coun-
 tenance
 Of your fierce war, may ken the glittering
 lance,
 And hear you shouting forth your brave
 intent.
 Left single, in bold parley, ye, of yore,
 Did from the Norman win a gallant
 wreath;
 Confirmed the charters that were years
 before;—
 No parleying now! In Britain is one
 breath;
 We all are with you now from shore to
 shore:—
 Ye men of Kent, this victory or death!

XXIV

WHAT if our numbers barely could defy
 The arithmetic of babes, must foreign
 hordes,
 Slaves, vile as ever were befooled by
 words,
 Striking through English breasts the an-
 archy
 Of Terror, bear us to the ground, and tie
 Our hands behind our backs with felon
 cords?
 Yields every thing to discipline of
 swords?
 Is man as good as man, none low, none
 high?
 Nor discipline nor valour can withstand
 The shock, nor quell the inevitable rout,
 When in some great extremity breaks
 out
 A people, on their own beioved Land
 Risen, like one man, to combat in the
 sight
 Of a just God for liberty and right.

XXV

LINES ON THE EXPECTED
 INVASION

1803

COME ye—who, if (which Heaven avert!)
 the Land
 Were with herself at strife, would take
 your stand,
 Like gallant Falkland, by the Monarch's
 side,
 And, like Montrose, make Loyalty your

Come ye—who, not less zealous, might
 display
 Banners at enmity with regal sway,
 And, like the Pymys and Miltons of that
 day,
 Think that a State would live in sounder
 health
 If Kingship bowed its head to Common-
 wealth—
 Ye too—whom no discreditable fear
 Would keep, perhaps with many a fruit-
 less tear,
 Uncertain what to choose and how to
 steer—
 And ye—who might mistake for sober
 sense
 And wise reserve the plea of indolence—
 Come ye—whate'er your creed—O waken
 all,
 Whate'er your temper, at your Country's
 Resolving (this a free-born Nation can)
 To have one Soul, and perish to a man,
 Or save this honoured Land from every
 Lord
 But British reason and the British
 sword.

XXVI

ANTICIPATION. OCTOBER, 1803

SHOUT, for a mighty Victory is won!
 On British ground the Invaders are laid
 low;
 The breath of Heaven has drifted them
 like snow,
 And left them lying in the silent sun,
 Never to rise again!—the work is done.
 Come forth, ye old men, now in peaceful
 show
 And greet your sons! drums beat and
 trumpets blow!
 Make merry, wives! ye little children,
 stun
 Your grandame's ears with pleasure of
 your noise!
 Clap, infants, clap your hands! Divine
 must be
 That triumph, when the very worst, the
 pain,
 And even the prospect of our brethren
 slain,
 Hath something in it which the heart
 enjoys:—
 In glory will they sleep and endless
 sanctity.

XXVII

NOVEMBER, 1806

ANOTHER year!—another deadly blow!
 Another mighty Empire overthrown!
 And We are left, or shall be left, alone;
 The last that dare to struggle with the
 Foe.

'Tis well! from this day forward we
shall know
That in ourselves our safety must be
sought;
That by our own tight hands it must be
wrought;
That we must stand unpropped, or be
laid low.
O dastard whom such foretaste doth not
cheer!
We shall exult, if they who rule the land
Be men who hold its many blessings dear,
Wise, upright, valiant; not a servile
band,
Who are to judge of danger which they
fear.
And honour which they do not under-
stand.

XXVIII
ODE

Who rises on the banks of Seine,
And binds her temples with the civic
wreath?
What joy to read the promise of her
mien!
How sweet to rest her wide-spread wings
beneath!
But they are ever playing,
And twinkling in the light,
And, if a breeze be straying,
That breeze she will invite;
And stands on tiptoe, conscious she is
fair,
And calls a look of love into her face,
And spreads her arms, as if the general
air
Alone could satisfy her wide embrace.
—Melt, Principalities, before her melt!
Her love ye hailed—her wrath have felt!
But She through many a change of form
hath gone,
And stands amidst you now an armed
creature,
Whose panoply is not a thing put on,
But the live scales of a portentous
nature;
That, having forced its way from birth
to birth,
Stalks round—abhorred by Heaven, a
terror to the Earth!

I marked the breathings of her dra-
gon crest;
My Soul, a sorrowful interpreter.
In many a midnight vision bowed
Before the ominous aspect of her sprar;
Whether the mighty beam, in scorn up-
held,
Threatened her foes,—or, pompously at
rest,

Seemed to bisect her orb'd shield,
As stretches a blue bar of solid cloud
Across the setting sun and all the fiery
west.

III

So did she daunt the Earth, and God
defy!
And, wheresoe'er she spread her sove-
reignty,
Pollution tainted all that was most pure.
—Have we not known—and live we not
to tell—
That Justice seemed to hear her final
knell?
Faith buried deeper in her owl-deep
breast
Her stores, and sighed to find them in-
secure!
And Hope was maddened by the drops
that fell
From shades, her chosen place of short-
lived rest.
Shame followed shame, and woe sup-
planted woe—
Is this the only change that time can
show?
How long shall vengeance sleep? Ye
patient Heavens, how long?
—Infinite ejaculation! from the tongue
Of Nations wanting virtue to be strong
Up to the measure of accorded might,
And daring not to feel the majesty of
right!

IV

Weak Spirits are there—who would
ask,
Upon the pressure of a painful thing,
The lion's sinews, or the eagle's wing;
Or let their wishes loose, in forest-glade,
Among the lurking powers
Of herbs and lowly flowers,
Or seek, from saints above, miraculous
aid—
That Man may be accomplished for a
task
Which his own nature hath enjoined;
—and why? [him,
If, when that interference hath relieved
Hemust sink down to languish
In worse than former helplessness—and
lie

Till the caves roar,—and, im-
becility
Again engendering anguish,
The same weak wish returns, that had
before deceived him.

V

But Thou, supreme Disposer! may'st
not speed
The course of things, and change the
creed

Which hath been held aloft before
men's sight
Since the first framing of societies,
Whether, as bards have told in ancient
song,
Built up by soft seducing harmonies ;
Or prest together by the appetite,
And by the power, of wrong.

PART II

I

ON A CELEBRATED EVENT IN ANCIENT
HISTORY

A ROMAN master stands on Grecian
ground,
And to the people at the Isthmian
Games
Assembled, He, by a herald's voice,
proclaims
THE LIBERTY OF GREECE :—the words
rebound
Until all voices in one voice are drowned :
Glad acclamation by which air was
rent !
And birds, high flying in the element,
Dropped to the earth, astonished at the
sound !
Yet were the thoughtful grieved ; and
still that voice
Haunts, With sad echoes, musing Fancy's
Ah ! that a Conqueror's words should be
so dear :
Ah ! that a boon could shed such rap-
turous joys !
A gift of that which is not to be given
By all the blended powers of Earth and
Heaven.

II

UPON THE SAME EVENT

WHEN, far and wide, swift as the beams
of morn
The tidings passed of servitude repealed,
And of that joy which shook the Isth-
mian Field,
The rough Ætolians smiled with bitter
scorn.
" 'Tis known," cried they, " that he,
who would adorn
His envied temples with the Isthmian
crown,
Must either win, through effort of his
The prize, or be content to see it worn
By more deserving brows.—Yet so ye
prop,
Sons of the brave who fought at Marathon,
Your feeble spirits ! Greece her head
hath bowed,
As if the wreath of liberty thereon
Would fix itself as smoothly as a cloud,
Which, at Jove's will, descends on
Pelion's top."

III

TO THOMAS CLARKSON, ON THE FINAL
PASSING OF THE BILL FOR THE
ABOLITION OF THE SLAVE TRADE

MARCH, 1807

CLARKSON ! it was an obstinate hill to
climb :
How toilsome—nay, how dire—it was, by
thee
Is known ; by none, perhaps, so feelingly :
But Thou, who, starting in thy fervent
prime,
Dids^t first lead forth that enterprise sub-
lime,
Hast heard the constant Voice its charge
repeat, [seat,
Which, out of thy young heart's oracular
First roused thee.—O true yoke-fellow
of Time,
Duty's intrepid liegeman, see, the palm
Is won, and by all Nations shall be worn !
The blood-stained Writing is for ever
torn ;
And thou henceforth wilt have a good
man's calm.
A great man's happiness ; thy zeal shall
find [kind !
Repose at length, firm friend of human

IV

A PROPHECY. FEBRUARY, 1807

High deeds, O Germans, are to come
from you !
Thus in your books the record shall be
found,
" A watchword was pronounced, a potent
sound— [dew
ARMINIUS !—all the people quaked like
Stirred by the breeze ; they rose, a
Nation, true,
True to herself—the mighty Germany,
She, of the Danube and the Northern Sea,
She rose, and off at once the yoke she
threw. [trance :
All power was given her in the dreadful
Those new-born Kings she withered like
a flame."
—Woe to them all ! but heaviest woe and
shame
To that Bavarian who could first advance
His banner in accursed league with
France,
First open traitor to the German name !

V

COMPOSED BY THE SIDE OF GRASNERE
LAKE

1807

CLOUDS, lingering yet, extend in solid
bars

Through the grey west; and to! these
waters, steeled
By breezeless air to smoothest polish,
yield

A vivid repetition of the stars;
Jove, Venus, and the ruddy crest of
Mars

Amid his fellows beautifully revealed
At happy distance from earth's groaning
field.

Where ruthless mortals wage incessant
Is it a mirror?—or the nether Sphere
Opening to view the abyss in which she
feeds

Her own calm fires?—But list! a voice
is near;

Great Pan himself low-whispering
through the reeds,

"Be thankful, thou; for, if unholy
deeds

Ravage the world, tranquillity is here!"

VI

Go back to antique ages, if thine eyes
The genuine mien and character would
trace

Of the rash Spirit that still holds her
place,
Prompting the world's audacious vani-
ties!

Go back, and see the Tower of Babel rise;
The pyramid extend its monstrous base,
For some Aspirant of our short-lived
race,

Anxious an aery name to immortalise.
There, too, ere wiles and politic dis-
pute

Gave specious colouring to aim and act,
See the first mighty Hunter leave the
brute—

To chase mankind, with men in armies
packed

For his field-pastime high and absolute,
While, to dislodge his game, cities are
sacked!

VII

COMPOSED WHILE THE AUTHOR WAS
ENGAGED IN WRITING A TRACT,
OCCASIONED BY THE CONVENTION
OF CINTRA

1808

Nor 'mid the World's vain objects that
enslave

The free-born Soul—that World whose
vaunted skill

In selfish interest perverts the will,
Whose factions lead astray the wise and
brave—

Not there: but in dark wood and
rocky cave,

And hollow vale which foaming torrents
fill

With omnipresent murmur as they rave
Down their steep beds, that never shall
be still:

Here, mighty Nature! in this school
sublime

I weigh the hopes and fears of suffering
Spain;

For her consult the auguries of time,
And through the human heart explore my
way;

And look and listen—gathering, whence
I may.

Triumph, and thoughts no bondage
can restrain.

VIII

COMPOSED AT THE SAME TIME AND ON
THE SAME OCCASION

I dropped my pen; and listened to the
Wind

That sang of trees up-torn and vessels
lost—

A midnight harmony; and wholly
lost

To the general sense of men by chains
confined

Of business, care, or pleasure; or resigned
To timely sleep. Thought I, the im-
passioned strain,

Which, without aid of numbers, I
sustain.

Like acceptance from the World will
find.

Yet some with apprehensive ear shall
drink

A dirge devoutly breathed o'er sorrows
past:

And to the attendant promise will give
heed—

The prophecy,—like that of this wild
blast.

Which, while it makes the heart with
sadness shrink,

Tells also of bright calms that shall
succeed.

IX

HOFFER

Of mortal parents is the Hero born
By whom the undaunted Tyrolese are
led?

Or is it Tell's great Spirit, from the dead
Returned to animate an age forlorn?

He comes like Phœbus, through the gates
of morn

When dreary darkness is discomfited,
Yet mark his modest state! upon his
head,

That simple crest, a heron's plume, is
worn.

O Liberty! they stagger at the shock
From van to rear—and with one mind
would flee,

But half their host is buried :—rock on
rock
Descends—beneath this godlike War-
rior, see !
Hills, torrents, woods, embodied to
bosom
The Tyrant, and confound his cruelty.

X

ADVANCE—come forth from thy Tyro-
lean ground,
Dear Liberty ! stern Nymph of soul
untamed !
Sweet Nymph, O rightly of the moun-
tains named !
Through the long chain of Alps from
mound to mound
And o'er the eternal snows, like Echo,
bound ;
Like Echo, when the hunter trips at
dawn
Have roused her from her sleep : and
forest-lawn,
Cliffs, woods and caves, her viewless
steps resound
And babble of her pastime !—O, O, O, O, O
Power !
With such invisible motion speed thy
flight,
Through hanging clouds, from craggy
height to height,
Through the green vales and through
the herdsman's bower—
That all the Alps may gladden in thy
might,
Here, there, and in all places at one hour.

XI

FEELINGS OF THE TYROLESE

THE Land we from our fathers had in
trust,
And to our children will transmit, or die :
This is our maxim, this our piety ;
And God and Nature say that it is just.
That which we would perform in arms—
we must !
We read the dictate in the infant's eye ;
In the wife's smile ; and in the placid
sky ;
And, at our feet, amid the silent dust
Of them that were before us.—Sing aloud
Old songs, the precious music of the
heart !
Give, herds and flocks, your voices to
the wind !
While we go forth, a self-devoted crowd,
With weapons grasped in fearless hands,
to assert
Our virtue, and to vindicate man's mind.

XII

ALAS ! what boots the long laborious
quest

Of moral prudence, sought through good
and ill ;
Or pains abstruse—to elevate the will,
And lead us on to that transcendent rest
Where every passion shall the sway
attest
Of Reason, seated on her sovereign hill ;
What is it but a vain and curious skill,
If sapient Germany must lie deprest,
Beneath the brutal sword ?—Her
haughty Schools
Shall blush ; and may not we with
sorrow say,
A few strong instincts and a few plain
rules,
Among the herdsmen of the Alps, have
wrought
More for mankind at this unhappy day
Than all the pride of intellect and
thought ?

XIII

AND is it among rude untutored Dales,
There, and there only, that the heart
is true ?
And, rising to repel or to subdue,
Is it by rocks and woods that man
prevails ?
Ah no ! though Nature's dread protec-
tion fails,
There is a bulwark in the soul. This
knew
Iberian Burghers when the sword they
drew
In Zaragoza, naked to the gales
Of fiercely-breathing war. The truth
was felt
By Palafox, and many a brave compeer,
Like him of noble birth and noble mind ;
By ladies, meek-eyed women without
fear :
And wanderers of the street, to whom
is dealt
The bread which without industry
they find.

XIV

O'ER the wide earth, on mountain and
on plain,
Dwells in the affections and the soul
of man
A Godhead, like the universal PAN ;
But more exalted, with a brighter train ;
And shall his bounty be dispensed in
vain,
Showered equally on city and on field,
And neither hope nor steadfast promise
yield
In these usurping times of fear and pain ?
Such doom awaits us. Nay, forbid it
Heaven !
We know the arduous strife, the eternal
laws

To which the triumph of all good is given,
High sacrifice, and labour without pause,
Even to the death:—else wherefore
should the eye
Of man converse with immortality?

XV

ON THE FINAL SUBMISSION OF THE
TYROLESE

It was a moral end for which they
fought;
Else how, when mighty Thrones were
put to shame,
Could they, poor Shepherds, have pre-
served an aim.
A resolution, or enlivening thought?
Nor hath that moral good been vainly
sought;
For in their magnanimity and fame
Powers have they left, an impulse, and
a claim
Which neither can be overturned nor
bought.
Sleep, Warriors, sleep! among your
hills repose!
We know that ye, beneath the stern
control
Of awful prudence, keep the unvan-
quished soul:
And when, impatient of her guilt and
woes,
Europe breaks forth; then, Shepherds!
shall ye rise
For perfect triumph o'er your Enemies.

XVI

Hail, Zaragoza! If with unwet eye
We can approach, thy sorrow to behold,
Yet is the heart not pitiless nor cold;
Such spectacle demands not tear or sigh.
These desolate remains are trophies
high
Of more than martial courage in the
breast
Of peaceful civic virtue: they attest
Thy matchless worth to all posterity.
Blood flowed before thy sight without
remorse;
Disease consumed thy vitals; War
upheaved
The ground beneath thee with volcanic
force:
Dread trials! yet encountered and
sustained
Till not a wreck of help or hope remained.
And law was from necessity received.

XVII

SAY, what is Honour?—'Tis the finest
sense
Of justice which the human mind can
frame,

Intent each lurking frailty to disclaim,
And guard the way of life from all
offence
Suffered or done. When lawless vio-
lence
Invades a Realm, so pressed that in the
scale
Of perilous war her weightiest armies
fall,
Honour is hopeful elevation,—whence
Glory, and triumph. Yet with politic
skill
Endangered States may yield to terms
unjust;
Stoop their proud heads, but not unto
the dust—
A Foe's most favourite purpose to ful-
fil:
Happy occasions oft by self-mistrust
Are forfeited; but infamy doth kill.

XVIII

THE martial courage of a day is vain,
An empty noise of death the battle's
roar,
If vital hope be wanting to restore,
Or fortitude be wanting to sustain,
Armies or kingdoms. We have heard a
strain
Of triumph, how the labouring Danube
bore
A weight of hostile corpses: drenched
with gore
Were the wide fields, the hamlets heaped
with slain.
Yet see (the mighty tumult overpast)
Austria a Daughter of her Throne hath
sold!
And her Tyrolean Champion we behold
Murdered, like one ashore by shipwreck
cast,
Murdered without relief. Oh! blind as
bold,
To think that such assurance can stand
fast!

XIX

BRAVE Schill! by death delivered, take
thy flight
From Prussia's timid region. Go, and
rest
With heroes, 'mid the islands of the
Blest,
Or in the fields of empyrean light.
A meteor wert thou crossing a dark
night:
Yet shall thy name, conspicuous and
sublime,
Shine in the spacious firmament of time,
Fixed as a star: such glory is thy right.
Alas! it may not be: for earthly fame
Is Fortune's frail dependant; yet there
lives

A Judge, who, as man claims by merit,
gives;
To whose all-pondering mind a noble
aim.
Faithfully kept, is as a noble deed:
In whose pure sight all virtue doth
succeed.

XX

CALL not the royal Swede unfortunate,
Who never did to Fortune bend the
knee;
Who slighted fear; rejected steadfastly
Temptation; and whose kingly name
and state
Have "perished by his choice, and not
his fate!"
Hence lives He, to his inner self en-
deared;
And hence, wherever virtue is revered,
He sits a more exalted Potentate,
Throned in the hearts of men. Should
Heaven ordain
That this great Servant of a righteous
cause
Must still have sad or yeeting thoughts
to endure,
Yet may a sympathizing spirit pause,
Admonished by these truths, and quench
all pain
In thankful joy and gratulation pure.¹

XXI

LOOK now on that Adventurer who hath
paid
His vows to Fortune; who, in cruel
slight
Of virtuous hope, of liberty, and right,
Hath followed wheresoe'er a way was
made
By the blind Goddess,—ruthless, un-
dismayed;
And so hath gained at length a pros-
perous height, [might
Round which the elements of worldly
Beneath his haughty feet, like clouds,
are laid.
O joyless power that stands by lawless
force! [hate,
Curses eye his dire portion, scorn and
Internal darkness and unquiet breath;
And, if old judgments keep their sacred
course,
Him from that height shall Heaven
precipitate.
By violent and ignominious death.

XXII

Is there a power that can sustain and
cheer
The captive chieftain, by a tyrant's
doom,

Forced to descend into his destined
tomb—
A dungeon dark! where he must waste
the year,
And lie cut off from all his heart holds
dear;
What time his injured country is a
stage
Whereon deliberate Valour and the rage
Of righteous Vengeance side by side
appear,
Filling from morn to night the heroic
scene
With deeds of hope and everlasting
praise:—
Say can he think of this with mind
serene
And silent fetters? Yes, if visions
bright
Shine on his soul, reflected from the
days
When he himself was tried in open
light.

XXIII

1810

AU! where is Palafox? Nor tongue
nor pen
Reports of him, his dwelling or his
grave!
Does yet the unheard-of vessel ride the
wave?
Or is she swallowed up, remote from ken
Of pitying human-nature? Once again
Methinks that we shall hail thee, Cham-
pion brave,
Redeemed to baffle that imperial Slave,
And through all Europe cheer despond-
ing men
With new-born hope. Unbounded is the
might
Of martyrdom, and fortitude, and right.
Hark, how thy Country triumphs!—
Smilingly
The Eternal looks upon her sword that
gleams,
Like his own lightning, over mountains
high,
On rampart, and the banks of all her
streams.

XXIV

IN due observance of an ancient rite,
The rude Biscayans, when their children
lie
Dead in the sinless time of infancy,
Attire the peaceful corse in vestments
white;
And, in like sign of cloudless triumph
bright, [brows
They bind the unoffending creature's
With happy garlands of the pure white

¹ See Note to Sonnet VII, page 245.

Then do a festal company unite
In choral song; and, while the uplifted
cross
Of Jesus goes before, the child is borne
Uncovered to his grave: 'tis closed,—
her loss
The Mother *then* mourns, as she needs
must mourn:
But soon, through Christian faith, is
grief subdued;
And joy returns, to brighten fortitude.

XXV

FEELINGS OF A NOBLE BISCAYAN AT ONE
OF THOSE FUNERALS

1810

YET, yet, Biscayans! we must meet our
Foes
With firmer soul, yet labour to regain
Our ancient freedom; else 'twere worse
than vain
To gather round the bier these festal
shows.
A garland fashioned of the pure white
rose
Becomes not one whose father is a
slave:
Oh, bear the infant covered to his grave!
These venerable mountains now enclose
A people sunk in apathy and fear.
If this endure, farewell, for us, all good!
The awful light of heavenly innocence
Will fail to illuminate the infant's bier;
And guilt and shame, from which is no
defence,
Descend on all that issues from our
blood.

XXVI

THE OAK OF GUERNICA

The ancient oak of Guernica, says Laborde in
his account of Biscay, is a most venerable
natural monument. Ferdinand and Isabella,
in the year 1476, after hearing mass in the
church of Santa Maria de la Antigua, repaired
to this tree, under which they swore to the
Biscayans to maintain their *fueros* (privileges).
What other interest belongs to it in the
minds of this people will appear from the
following.

SUPPOSED ADDRESS TO THE SAME

1810

OAK of Guernica! Tree of holier power
Than that which in Dodona did en-
shrine
(So faith too fondly deemed) a voice
divine
Heard from the depths of its aerial
bower—
How canst thou flourish at this blighting
hour?
What hope, what joy can sunshine
bring to thee,

Or the soft breezes from the Atlantic
sea,
The dews of morn, or April's tender
shower?
Stroke merciful and welcome would that
be
Which should extend thy branches on
the ground,
If never more within their shady round
Those lofty-minded Lawgivers shall
meet,
Peasant and lord, in their appointed
seat,
Guardians of Biscay's ancient liberty.

XXVII

INDIGNATION OF A HIGH-MINDED
SPANIARD

1810

WE can endure that He should waste
our lands,
Despoil our temples, and by sword and
flame [came]
Return us to the dust from which we
Such food a Tyrant's appetite demands:
And we can brook the thought that by
his hands
Spain may be overpowered, and he
possess,
For his delight, a solemn wilderness
Where all the brave lie dead. But,
when of hands
Which he will break for us he dares to
speak,
Of benefits, and of a future day
When our enlightened minds shall bless
his sway:
Then, the strained heart of fortitude
proves weak;
Our groans, our blushes, our pale cheeks
declare
That he has power to inflict what we
lack strength to bear.

XXVIII

AVANT all specious pliancy of mind
In men of low degree, all smooth pre-
tence!

I better like a blunt indifference,
And self-respecting slowness, disinclined,
To win me at first sight: and be there
joined

Patience and temperance with this
high reserve,

Honour that knows the path and will
not swerve;

Afections, which, if put to proof, are
sincere;

And piety towards God. Such men of
old

Were England's native growth; and,
throughout Spain

POEMS TO NATIONAL INDEPENDENCE AND LIBERTY 257

(Thanks to high God) forests of such
remain:
Then for that Country let our hopes
be bold;
For matched with these shall policy
prove vain.
Her arts, her strength, her iron, and
her gold.

XXIX

1810

O'ERWEENING Statesmen have full long,
relied
On fleets and armies, and external
wealth:
But from *within* proceeds a Nation's
health:
Which shall not fail, though poor men
cleave with pride
To the paternal floor; or turn aside,
In the thronged city, from the walks of
gash.
As being all unworthy to detain
A Soul by contemplation sanctified.
There are who cannot languish in this
strife,
Spaniards of every rank, by whom the
good
Of such high course was felt and under-
stood:
Who to their Country's cause have
bound a life
Erewhile, by solemn consecration, given
To labour, and to prayer, to nature, and
to heaven.¹

XXX

THE FRENCH AND THE SPANISH GUERRILLAS
Hunger, and sultry heat, and nipping
blast
From bleak hill-top, and length of march
by night
Through heavy swamp, or over snow-
clad height—
These hardships ill-sustained, these
dangers past,
The roving Spanish Bands are reached
at last,
Charged, and dispersed like foam: but
as a flight
Of scattered quails by signs do reunite.
So these,—and, heard of once again,
are chased
With combinatorious of long-practised
art
Gone are they, viewless as the buried
dead:
Where now?—Their sword is in the
Poeman's heart!

¹ See Laborde's character of the Spanish
people; from him the sentiment of these last
two lines is taken.

And thus from year to year his walk
they thwart,
And hang like dreams around his guilty
bed.

XXXI

SPANISH GUERRILLAS

1811

THEY seek, are sought; to daily battle
led,
Shrink not, though far outnumbered
by their Foes,
For they have learnt to open and to
close
The ridges of grim war; and at their
head
Are captains such as erst their country
bred
Or fostered, self-supported chiefs,—like
those
Whom hardy Rome was fearful to
oppose;
Whose desperate shock the Cartha-
ginian fled.
In One who lived unknown a shepherd's
life
Redoubled Viriatus breathes again;
And Mina, nourished in the studious
shade,
With that great Leader² vies, who,
sick of strife
And bloodshed, longed in quiet to be
laid
In some green³ island of the western
main.

XXXII

1811

THE power of Armies is a visible thing,
Formal, and circumscribed in time and
space;
But who the limits of that power shall
trace
Which a brave People into light can
bring
Or hide, at will,—for freedom combating
By just revenge inflamed? No foot
may chase,
No eye can follow, to a fatal place
That power, that spirit, whether on the
wing
Like the strong wind, or sleeping like
the wind
Within its awful caves.—From year to
year
Springs this indigenous produce far
and near,
No craft this subtle element can bind,
Rising like water from the soil, to find
In every nook a lip that it may cheer—

² Sertorius.

XXXIII

1811

HERE pause: the poet claims at least his
praise.

That virtuous Liberty hath been the
scope

Of his pure song, which did not shrink
from hope

In the worst moment of these evil days;
From hope, the paramount duty that

Heaven lays,
For its own honour, on man's suffering

heart.
Never may from our souls one truth

depart—
That an accursed thing it is to gaze

On prosperous tyrants with a dazzled
eye;

Nor—touched with due abhorrence of
their guilt

For whose dire ends tears flow, and blood
is spilt,

And justice labours in extremity—
Forget thy weakness, upon which is

built,
O wretched man, the throne of tyranny!

XXXIV

THE FRENCH ARMY IN RUSSIA

1812-13

HUMANITY, delighting to behold
A fond reflection of her own decay,

Hath painted. Winter like a traveller
old,

Propped on a staff, and, through the
sullen day,

In hooded mantle, limping o'er the plain,
As though his weakness were disturbed

by pain:
Or, if a juster fancy should allow

An undisputed symbol of command,
The chosen sceptre is a withered bough,

Infirmly grasped within a palsied hand.
These emblems suit the helpless and

forlorn;
But mighty Winter the device shall

scorn.

For he it was—dread Winter! who beset,
Klinging round van and rear his ghastly

net,
That host, when from the regions of the

Pole
They shrunk, insane ambition's barren

goal—
That host, as huge and strong as e'er

defied
Their God, and placed their trust in

human pride!
As fathers persecute rebellious sons,

He smote the blossoms of their warrior
youth;

He called on Frost's inexorable tooth
Life to consume in Manhood's firmest

hold;
Nor spared the reverend blood that

feebly runs;
For why—unless for liberty enrolled

And sacred home—ah! why should
hoary Age be bold?

Fleet the Tartar's reinless steed,
But fleet far the pinions of the Wind,

Which from Siberian caves the Monarch
freed,

And sent him forth, with squadrons of
his kind,

And bade the Snow their ample backs
bestride,

And to the battle ride.
No pitying voice commands a halt.

No courage can repel the dire assault;
Distracted, spiritless, benumbed, and

blind.
Whole legions sink—and, in one instant,

find
Burial and death: look for them—and

descry,
When morn returns, beneath the clear

blue sky,
A soundless waste, a trackless vacancy!

XXXV

ON THE SAME OCCASION

'Ye Storms, resound the praises of your
King!

And ye mild Seasons—in a sunny clime,
Midway on some high hill, while Father

Time
Looks on delighted—meet in festal ring,
And loud and long of Winter's triumph

sing!
Sing ye, with blossoms crowned, and

fruits, and flowers,
Of Winter's breath surcharged with

sleety showers,
And the dire flapping of his hoary wing!

Knit the blithe dance upon the soft
green grass;

With feet, hands, eyes, looks, lips, report
your gain;

Whisper it to the billows of the main,
And to the aerial zephyrs as they pass,

That old decrepit Winter—He hath slain
That Host, which rendered all your

bounties vain!

XXXVI

By Moscow self-devoted to a blaze
Of dreadful sacrifice; by Russian blood

Lavished in fight with desperate hardi-
hood;

The unfeeling Elements no claim shall
raise

To rob our Human Nature of just praise

For what she did and suffered. Pledge
sure :

Of a deliverance absolute and pure
She gave, if Faith might tread the beaten
ways

Of Providence. But now did the Most
High

Exalt his still small voice ;—to quell that
Host

Gathered his power, a manifest ally ;
He, whose heaped waves confounded the
proud boast

Of Pharaoh, said to Famine, Snow, and
Frost.

“ Finish the strife by deadliest victory ! ”

XXXVII

THE GERMAN ON THE HEIGHTS OF
HOCKHEIM

ABRUPTLY paused the strife ;—the field
throughout

Resting upon his arms each warrior stood,
Checked in the very act and deed of
blood,

With breath suspended, like a listening
scout.

O Silence ! thou wert mother of a shout
That through the texture of yon azure
dome

Cleaves its glad way, a cry of harvest
home

Uttered to Heaven in ecstasy devout !
The barrier Rhine hath flashed, through
battle-smoke,

On men who gaze heart-sinitten by the
view,

As if all Germany had felt the shock
—Fly, wretched Gauls ! ere they the
charge renew

Who have seen—themselves now casting
off the yoke—

The unconquerable Stream his course
pursue.

XXXVIII

NOVEMBER, 1813

Now that all hearts are glad, all faces
bright,

Our aged Sovereign sits, to the ebb and
flow [woe]

Of states and kingdoms, to their joy or
insensible. He sits deprived of sight,
and lamentably wrapt in twofold night.

Whom no weak hopes deceived ; whose
mind ensued, [tude,

Through perilous war, with regal fortitude,
Peace that should claim respect from
lawless Might.

Dread King of Kings, vouchsafe a ray
divine

To his forlorn condition ! let thy grace
Upon his inner soul in mercy shine ;

Permit his heart to kindle, and to em-
brace

(Though it were only for a moment's
space)

The triumphs of this hour ; for they are
THINE !

XXXIX

ODE

1814

— Carmina possumus
Donare, et pretium dicere muneris.
Non incisa notis marmora publicis,
Per quæ spiritus et vita redit bonis
Post mortem dubius.

— clarius indicant
Laudes, quam — Pierides ; neque,
Si chartæ saleant quod bene feceris,
Mercedem tuleris. — Hor. Car. 8. Lib. 4.

WHEN the soft hand of sleep had closed
the latch

On the tired household of corporeal sense,
And Fancy, keeping unreluctant watch,
Was free her choicest favours to dis-
pense ;

I saw, in wondrous, perspective dis-
played,

A landscape more august than happiest
skill

Of pencil ever clothed with light and
shade ;

An intermingled pomp of vale and hill,
City, and naval stream, suburban grove,
And stately forest where the wild deer
rove :

Nor wanted lurking hamlet, dusky
towns,

And scattered rural farms of aspect
bright ;

And, here and there, between the pas-
toral downs,

The azure sea upswelled upon the sight.
Fair prospect, such as Britain only
shows !

But not a living creature could be seen
Through its wide circuit, that, in deep
repose,

And, even to sadness, lonely and serene,
Lay hushed : till—through a portal in
the sky

Brighter than brightest loop-hole, in a
storm,

Opening before the sun's triumphant
eye—

Issued, to sudden view, a glorious Form !
Earthward it glided with a swift descent :
Saint George himself this Visitant must
be :

And, ere a thought could ask on what
intent

He sought the regions of humanity,
A thrilling voice was heard, that vivified
City and field and flood ;—aloud it cried—

"Though from my celestial home,
 "Like a Champion, amid I come;
 "On my helm the dragon crest,
 "And the red cross on my breast.
 "I, the Guardian of this Land,
 "Speak not now of toilsome duty,
 "Well obeyed was that command—
 "Whence bright days of festive
 beauty.

"Haste, Virgins, haste!—the flowers
 which summer gave

"Have perished in the field

"But the green thickets generously
 shall yield

"Fit garlands for the brave

"That will be welcome if by you
 entwined

"Haste, Virgins, haste and you, ye
 Mitrans grave

"Go forth with rival youthfulness of
 mind,

"And gather what ye find

"Of hardy laurel and wild holly boughs—
 To deck your stern Defenders modest
 brows

"Such simple gifts prepare,

"Though they have gained a worthier
 need

"And in due time shall share

"Those palms and unrauthful wreaths
 "Unto their martyr'd Countrymen de-
 cored

"In realms where everlasting freshness
 breathes

II

And lo! with crimson banners proudly
 streaming,

And upright weapons innocently gleam-
 ing,

Along the surface of a spacious plain
 Advance in order the redoubted Bands,

And there receive green chaplets from
 the hands

Of a fair female train—

Maidens and Matrons, dight
 In robes of dazzling white,

While from the crowd bursts forth a
 rapturous noise

By the cloud-capt hills retorted

And a throng of rosy boys

In loose fashion tell their joys
 And grey hardihoods, on staffs supported,

Look round, and by their smiling seem-
 to say,

Thus strives a grateful Country to dis-
 play

The mighty debt which nothing can
 repay

III

Anon before my sight a palace rose
 Built of all precious substance,—so pure

And exquisite, that sleep alone bestows

Ability like splendour to endure:

Entered, with streaming thousands,
 through the gate,

I saw the banquet spread beneath a
 Dome of state,

A lofty Dome, that dared to emulate

The heaven of sable night

With sturly lustre, yet had power to
 throw

Solemn effulgence, clear as solar light,
 Upon a princely company below,

While the vault rang with choral har-
 mony,

Like some Nymph haunted grot beneath
 the roaring sea

—No sooner ceased that peal, than on
 the verge

Of exultation hung a large
 Reigned from a soft and lonely instru-
 ment

That kindled recollections
 Of agonised affections.

And, though some tears the strain
 attended,

The mournful passion ended
 In peace of spirit, and sublime content

IV

But garlands wether, festal shows
 depart,

Like drums themselves, and sweetest
 sound

(Albeit of effect profound)

It was—and it is gone

Victorious England! bid the silent Air
 Reflect, in glowing hues that shall not
 fade,

Those high achievements even as she
 arrayed

With second life the deed of Marathon
 Upon Athenian walls,

So may she labour for thy civic halls
 And be the guardian spaces

Of consecrated places,
 As nobly graced by Sculpture's patient
 toil,

And let imperishable Columns rise
 Fixed in the depths of this courageous
 soul,

Expressive signals of a glorious strife,
 And competent to shed a spark divine

Into the torpid breast of daily life—
 Records on which, for pleasure of all eyes,

The morning sun may shine
 With gratulation thoroughly benign

V

And ye, Pierian Sisters, sprung from
 Jove

And sage Mnemosynet—full long de-
 barred

From your first mansions, exiled all too
 long

From many a hallowed stream and grove,
Dear native regions where ye wont to rove,

Chanting for patriot heroes the reward
Of never-dying song!

Now (for, though Truth descending from above

The Olympian summit hath destroyed
for aye

Your kindred Deities, Ye live and move,
Spared for obeisance from perpetual love
For privilege redeemed of godlike sway)

Now, on the margin of some spotless
fountain,

Or top serene of unmolested mountain,
Strike audibly the noblest of your lyres.

And for a moment meet the soul's desires!
That I, or some more favoured Bard,

may hear
What ye, celestial Maids! have often sung

Of Britain's acts,—may catch it with
rapt ear,

And give the treasure to our British
tongue!

So shall the characters of that proud
page

Support their mighty theme from age
to age;

And, in the desert places of the earth,
When they to future empires have given birth,

So shall the people gather and believe
The bold report, transferred to every clime;

And the whole world, not envious but
admiring,

And to the like aspiring,
Own—that the progeny of this fair Isle

Had power as lofty actions to achieve
As were performed in man's heroic prime;

Nor wanted, when their fortitude had
held

Its even tenor, and the foe was quelled,
A corresponding virtue to beguile

The hostile purpose of wide-wasting
Time—

That not in vain they laboured to secure,
For their great deeds, perpetual memory,

And fame as largely spread as land and
sea,

By Works of spirit high and passion
pure!

XL

FEELINGS OF A FRENCH ROYALIST, ON
THE DISINTERMENT OF THE REMAINS
OF THE DUKE D'ENGHIEN

DEAR Reliques! from a pit of vilest
mould

Uprisen—to lodge among ancestral
kings

And to inflict shame's salutary stings
On the remorseless hearts of men grown
old

In a blind worship; men perversely
bold

Even to this hour,—yet, some shall
now forsake

Their monstrous Idol if the dead e'er
spake,

To warn the living; if truth were ever
told

By aught redeemed out of the hollow
grave:

O murdered Prince! meek, loyal,
pious, brave!

The power of retribution once was given;
But 'tis a rueful thought that willow
bands

So often tie the thunder-wielding hands
Of Justice sent to earth from highest
Heaven!

XLI

OCCASIONED BY THE BATTLE OF
WATERLOO

(The last six lines intended for an Inscription)
FEBRUARY, 1816

INTREPID sons of Albion! not by you
Is life despised; ah no, the spacious
earth

Ne'er saw a race who held, by right of
birth,

So many objects to which love is due:
Ye slight not life—to God and nature
true;

But death, becoming death, is dearer far,
When duty bids you bleed in open war:

Hence hath your prowess quelled that
impious crew.

Heroes!—for instant sacrifice prepared:
Yet filled with ardour and on triumph
bent

'Mid direst shocks of mortal accident—
To you who fell, and you whom slaughter
spared

To guard the fallen, and consummate
the event,

Your Country rears this sacred Monu-
ment!

XLII

SIEGE OF VIENNA RAISED BY
JOHN SOBIESKI

FEBRUARY, 1816

O, FOR a kindling touch from that pure
flame

Which ministered, erewhile, to a sacrifice
Of gratitude, beneath Italian skies,

In words like these: "Up, Voice of
song! proclaim

"Thy saintly rapture with celestial aim;

"For lo! the Imperial City stands released

"From bondage threatened by the embattled East,

"And Christendom respires; from guilt and shame

"Redeemed, from miserable fear set free By one day's feat, one mighty victory.

"Chant the Deliverer's praise in every tongue!

"The cross shall spread, the crescent hath waxed dim;

"He conquering, as in joyful Heaven is sung.

"HE CONQUERING THROUGH GOD, AND GOD BY HIM."¹

XLIII

OCCASIONED BY THE BATTLE OF WATERLOO

FEBRUARY, 1816

THE Bard—whose soul is meek as dawning day,

Yet trained to judgments righteously severe,

Fervid, yet conversant with holy fear;

As recognising one Almighty sway:

He—whose experienced eye can pierce the array

Of past events; to whom, in vision clear, The aspiring heads of future things appear,

Like mountain-tops whose mists have rolled away—

Assailed from all encumbrance of our time,²

He only, if such breathe, in strains devout

Shall comprehend this victory sublime:

Shall worthily rehearse the hideous rout,

The triumph hail, which from their peaceful clime

Angels might welcome with a choral shout!

XLIV

EMPERORS and Kings, how oft have temples rung

With impious thanksgiving, the Almighty's scorn!

How oft above their altars have been hung

Trophies that led the good and wise to mourn

Triumphant wrong, battle of battle born,

And sorrow that to fruitless sorrow clung!

Now, from Heaven-sanctioned victory, Peace is sprung;

In this firm hour Salvation lifts her horn.

¹ See Filicaja's Ode.

² "From all this world's encumbrance did himself assail."—Spenser.

Glory to arms! But, conscious that the nerve

Of popular reason, long mistrusted, freed Your thrones, ye Powers, from duty fear

to swerve!

Be just, be grateful; nor, the oppressor's creed

Reviving, heavier chastisement deserve Than ever forced unpitied hearts to bleed.

XLV

ODE

1815

IMAGINATION—ne'er before content,

But aye ascending, restless in her pride

From all that martial feats could yield To her desires, or to her hopes present—

Stood to the Victory, on that Belgic field,

Achieved, this closing deed magnificent,

And with the embrace was satisfied.

—Fly, ministers of Fame,

With every help that ye from earth and heaven may claim!

Bear through the world these tidings of delight!

—Hours, Days, and Months, have borne them in the sight

Of mortals, hurrying like a sudden shower.

That land-ward stretches from the sea,

The morning's splendours to devour;

But this swift travel scorns the company

Of irksome change, or threats from saddening power.

—The shock is given—the Adversaries bleed—

Lo, Justice triumphs! Earth is freed!

Joyful annunciation!—it went forth—

It pierced the caverns of the sluggish North—

It found no barrier on the ridge

Of Andes—frozen gulphs became its bridge—

The vast Pacific gladdens with the

Upon the Lakes of Asia 'tis bestowed—

The Arabian desert shapes a willing road

Across her burning breast,

For this refreshing incense from the West!

—Where snakes and lions breed,

Where towns and cities thick as stars appear,

Where'er fruits are gathered, and where'er seed—

The upturned soil receives the hopeful

While the Sun rules, and cross the shafts of night—

The unwearied arrow hath pursued its flight!

The eyes of good men thankfully give heed.

'And in its sparkling progress read
Of virtue crowned with glory's deathless
 meed
Fervants exult to hear of kingdoms won,
And slaves are pleased to learn that
mighty feats are done
Even the proud realm, from whose dis-
 tracted borders
This messenger of good was launched in
air,
France, humbled France, amid her wild
disorders,
Feels, and hereafter shall the truth de-
 clare
That she too lacks not reason to rejoice,
And utter England's name with sadly
plausive voice

II

'O genuine glory, pure renown'
And well might it besem that mighty
 frown
Into whose bosom earth's last treasures
flow,
To whom all persecuted men retreat
If a new temple fit her votive trust
High on the shore of silver Thames—to
greet
The peaceful guest advancing from afar
Bright be the fabric as a star
Fresh risen and beautiful within—
 there meet
Dependence infinite, proportion just
A Pile that Grace approves and Time
can trust
With His most sacred wealth heroic
dust

III

But if the valiant of this land
In reverential modesty demand,
That all observance due to them be paid
Where their serene progenitors are laid
Kings, warriors, high souled poets, sages
 like sages,
England's illustrious sons of long, long
ages,
Be it not unordained that solemn rites
Within the court of those Gothic walks
shall be performed at pregnant intervals
Of commemoration holy that unites
The living generations with the dead
By the deep soil moving sense
Of religious eloquence—
By visual pomp, and by the tie
Of sweet and threatening harmony
Soft notes, awful as the organ
Of destructive tempests coming
And escaping from that sadness
Into elevated gladness
While the white-robed choir attendant,
Under mouldering banners pendant
Provoke all potent symphonies to raise
Songs of victory and praise,

For them who bravely stood unhurt, or
 bled
With medicable wounds, or found their
 graves
Upon the battle field, or under ocean's
 waves
Or where conducted home in single state,
And long procession there to lie,
Where their sons and all posterity,
Unheard by them, their deeds shall cele-
 brate

IV

Nor will the God of peace and love
Such martial service disapprove
He guides the pestilence—the cloud
Of locusts travels on His breath,
The region that in hope was ploughed
His drought consumes His mildew taints
with death
He springs the hushed Volcano's mine,
He puts the Earthquake on her still
design
Darkens the sun hath bade the forest
sink,
And drinking towns and cities, still can
drink
Cities and towns—tis Thou—the work
is Thine
The fierce tornado sleeps within Thy
counts—
He hears the word He flies—
And rivers perish in their poits
For thou art angry with Thine enemies!
For these and mourning for our errors,
And sins that point their terrors,
We bow our heads before Thee, and we
laud
And magnify Thy name Almighty God!
But Man is thy most awful instrument,
In working out a pure intent,
Thy clothst the wicked in their daz-
zling mail
And for Thy righteous purpose they pre-
vail
Thine arm from peril guards the coasts
Of them who in Thy laws delight
Thy presence turns the scale of doubtful
fight,
Tremendous God of battles, Lord of
Hosts!

V

I kneel—to Thee—
Father and Judge of all, with fervent
tongue
But in a gentler strain
Of contemplation, by no sense of wrong,
(Too quick and keen) incited to disdain
Of pity pleading from the heart in vain—
To THEE—to THEE
Just God of Christian and Humanity

Shall praises be poured forth, and
thanks ascend,
That Thou hast brought our warfare to
an end,
and that we need no second victory !
Blest, above measure blest,
if on Thy love our Land her hopes shall
rest,
And all the Nations labour to fulfil
Thy law, and live henceforth in peace
in pure good will

XLVI

ODE

THE MORNING OF THE DAY APPOINTED
FOR A GENERAL THANKSGIVING
JANUARY 15, 1816

HAIL, orient Conqueror of gloomy Night !
Thou that canst shed the bliss of grati-
tude
On hearts howe'er insensible or rude .
Whether Thy punctual visitations smite
The haughty towers where monarchs
dwell
Or Thou, impartial Sun, with presence
bright
Cheer'st the low threshold of the pea-
sant's cell !
Not un rejoiced I see Thee climb the sky
In naked splendour, clear from mist or
haze,
On cloud approaching to divert the rays,
Which even in deepest winter testify
Thy power and majesty,
Dazzling the vision that presumes to
gaze
—Well does thine aspect usher in this
Day,
As aptly suits therewith thine modest pace
Submitted to the chains
That bind thee to the path which God
ordains
That thou shalt trace,
Till, with the heavens and earth thou
pass away !
Nor less, the stillness of these frosty
plains,
Their utter stillness, and the silent grace
Of yon ethereal summits white with
snow,
(Whose tranquil pomp and spotless pur-
reposit of storms gone by
To us who tread below)
Do with the service of this Day accord,
—Divest Object which the uplifted eye
Of mortal man is suffered to behold
Thou, who upon those snow-clad Heights
has poured
Meek lustre, nor forget at the humble
Vale

Thou who dost warm Earth's universal
mould,
And for Thy bounty wert not unadored
By pious men of old :—
Once more, heart-cheering Sun, I bid
thee hail !
Bright be thy course to-day, let not thine
promise fail !

II

'Mid the deep quiet of this morning
hour,
All nature seems to hear me while I speak,
By feelings urged that do not vainly seek
Apt language, ready as the tuneful notes
That stream in blithe succession from
the throats
Of birds, in leafy bower,
Wishing a farewell to a vernal shower
—There is a radiant though a short-lived
flame,
That burns for Poets in the dawning
east .
And oft my soul hath kindled at the
flame,
When the captivity of sleep had ceased,
But He who had immovably the frame
Of the round world, and built, by laws
so strong,
A solid refuge for distress—
The towers of righteousness,
He knows that from a holier altar came
The quickening spark of this day's sacri-
fice .
Knows that the source is nobler whence
doth rise
The current of this matin song ;
That deeper far it lies
Than aught dependent on the fickle skies.

III

Have we not conquered ?—by the
vengeful sword !
Ah no by dint of Magnanimity ;
That curb'd the baser passions, and
left free
A loyal band to follow their liege Lord
Clear-sighted Honour, and his staid Coun-
cils,
Along a track of most unnatural years,
In execution of heroic deeds
Whose memory, spotless as the crystal
beads
Of morning dew upon the untrodden
meads,
Shall live enrolled above the starry
spheres
He, who in concert with an earthly string
Of Britain's acts would sing,
He with enraptured voice will tell
Of One whose spirit no reverse could
melt .

Of One that mid the failing never failed—
Who paints how Britain struggled and prevailed

Shall represent her labouring with an eye
Of circumspect humanity
Shall show her clothed with strength and skill,

All martial duties to fulfil,
Firm as a rock in stationary fight
In motion rapid as the lightning, sleek
Fierce as a flood gate bursting at mid night

To rouse the wicked from their guilt,
Woe woe to all that face her in the field
Appalled she may not be and cannot yield

IV

And thus is missed the secret truth
That can belong to human destiny
At which they only shall arrive
Who through the abyss of weakness dive

The very humbleness to proud the first
And one brief day is rightly set apart
For Him who liveth up, and liveth low
For that Almighty God to whom we owe
Say not that we have conquered—but
that we survive

V

How dreadful the dominion of the
impure!
Why should the song be tardy to
claim

That less than power unbounded could
not tame

That soul of Evil—which fit in hell let
loose
Had filled the astonished world with such
As boundless patience only could endure?
—Wide wasted regions—cities swept in
flame—

Who sees, may lift a streaming eye
To Heaven—who never saw may have
a sigh

But the foundation of our nature shakes
And with an infinite pain the spirit aches
When desolated countries towns in fire
Are but the avowed attire

Of warfare waged with desperate mind
Against the life of virtue in mankind
Assaulting without ruth
The citadels of truth

While the fair gardens of civility,
By ignorance defaced,
By violence laid waste
Perish without reprieve for flower or tree

VI

A crouching purpose—a distracted
will—
Opposed to hopes that batten upon

And to desires whose ever waxing horn
Not all the light of earthly power could
fill

Opposed to dark, deep plots of patient
skill

And to celebrities of lawless force
Which spurning God had flung away
remorse—

What could they gain but shadow of
address?

—So had proceeded propagating worse
And discipline was mission's dire excess
Widens the fatal web its lines extend
And deadlier poisons in the chalice blend
When will your trials teach you to be
wise?

—O for true Lords consult your
genius

VII

No more—the guilt is banished
And with the guilt the shame is fled
And with the guilt and shame the Woe
hath vanished

hark, the dust and ashes from her
Nimre these long rings of distress
Sully the limpid stream of thankfulness
What relic can gratitude imply

Seemly is the radiant vest of Joy?
What steps suitable to those that move
In prompt obedience to spontaneous
measures

Of glory and felicity and love
Surrounding the whole heart to sacred
pleasures?

VIII

O Britain, dearer far than life is dear,
If one there be
Of all thy progeny

Whom can forget thy prowess never more
Be that ungrateful Scun all wed to hear
Thy green leaves rustle in thy torrents
rur

As springs the lion from his den
As from a first brake
Up starts a hissing snake,

The old Arch despot re appeared,—
The sun

Wide Europe heaves impatient to be
cast

With all her armed Powers
On that offensive soil like waves
upon a thousand shores

The trumpet blew a universal blast!
But Thou art firmest in the field—
there stand

Receive the triumph destined to thy
hand!

All States have glorified themselves,
—their claims

Are weighed by Providence, in balance
even.

And now, in preference to the mightiest
names,
To Thee the exterminating sword is given.
Dread mark of approbation, justly
gained!
Exalted office, worthily sustained!

IX

Preserve, O Lord! within our hearts
The memory of thy favour.
That else insensibly departs,
And loses its sweet savour!
Lodge it within us!—as the power of
light
Lives inexhaustibly in precious gems,
Fixed on the front of Eastern diadems,
So shine our thankfulness for ever bright!
What offering, what transcendent monu-
ment
Shall our sincerity to Thee present?
—Not work of hands; but trophies
that may reach
To highest Heaven—the labour of the
Soul:
That builds, as Thy unerring precepts
teach,
Upon the internal conquests made by
each.
Her hope of lasting glory for the whole.
Yet will not heaven disown nor earth
gainsay
The outward service of this day;
Whether the worshippers entreat
Forgiveness from God's mercy-seat;
Or thanks and praises to His throne
ascend
That He has brought our warfare to an
end,
And that we need no second victory!—
Ha! what a ghastly sight for man to see;
And to the heavenly saints in peace who
dwell,
For a brief moment, terrible:
But, to thy sovereign penetration, fair,
Before whom all things are, that were,
All judgments that have been, or e'er
shall be:
Links in the chain of thy tranquillity!
Along the bosom of this favoured Nation,
Breathe Thou, this day, a vital undula-
tion!
Let all who do this land inherit
Be conscious of Thy moving spirit!
Oh, 'tis a goodly Ordinance,—the sight,
Though sprung from bleeding war, is one
of pure delight;
Bless Thou the hour, or ere the hour ar-
rive,
When a whole people shall kneel down
in prayer,
And, at one moment, in one rapture,
strive
With lip and heart to tell their gratitude

For Thy protecting care,
Their solemn joy—praising the Eternal
Lord
For tyranny subdued,
And for the sway of equity renewed,
For liberty confirmed, and peace re-
stored!

X

But hark—the summons!—down the
placid lake
Floats the soft cadence of the church-
tower bells;
Bright shines the Sun, as if his beams
would wake
The tender insects sleeping in their cells;
Bright shines the Sun—and not a breeze
to shake
The drops that tip the melting icicles.
O, enter now His temple gate!
Inviting words—perchance already sung
(As the crowd press devoutly down the
aisle
Of some old Minster's Venerable pile)
From voices into zealous passion stung,
While the tubed engine feels the inspir-
ing blast,
And has begun—its clouds of sound to
cast
Forth towards empyreal Heaven,
As if the fretted roof were riven.
Us, humbler ceremonies now await;
But in the bosom, with devout respect
The banner of our joy we will erect,
And strength of love our souls shall
elevate:
For to a few collected in His name,
Their heavenly Father will incline an ear
Gracious to service hallowed by its
aim:—
Awake! the majesty of God revere!
Go—and with foreheads meekly bowed
Present your prayers—go—and rejoice
aloud—
The Holy One will hear!
And what, 'mid silence deep, with faith
sincere,
Ye, in your low and undisturbed estate,
Shall simply feel and purely meditate—
Of warnings—from the unprecedented
might,
Which, in our time, the impious have
disclosed:
And of more arduous duties thence im-
posed
Upon the future advocates of right;
Of mysteries revealed,
And judgments unrepaled,
Of earthly revolution;
And final retribution,—
To his omniscience will appear
An offering not unworthy to find place,
On this high Day of THANKS, before the
Throne of Grace!

MEMORIALS OF A TOUR ON THE
CONTINENT

1820

DEDICATION

(SENT WITH THESE POEMS IN MS. TO ---)

DEAR Fellow-travellers! think not that the
Muse,
To You presenting these memorial Lays,
Can hope the general eye thereon would gaze
As on a mirror that gives back the hues
Of living Nature, no—though free to choose
The greenest bowers, the most inviting ways,
The fairest landscapes and the brightest days
RYDAL MOUNT, Nov., 1821.

Her skill she tried with less ambitious views.
For You she wrought: Ye only can supply
The life, the truth, the beauty: she confides
In that enjoyment which with You abides,
Trusts to your love and vivid memory:
Thus far contented, that for You her verse
Shall lack not power the "meeting soul to
pierce."

W. WORDSWORTH.

I

FISH-WOMEN.—ON LANDING AT CALAIS.

'Tis said, fantastic ocean doth enfold
The likeness of whate'er on land is seen.
But, if the Nereid Sisters and their Queen
Above whose heads the tide so long hath
rolled.

The Dames resemble whom we here be-
hold,

How fearful were it down through open-
ing waves

To sink, and meet them in the fretted
caves,

Withered, grotesque, immeasurably old,
And shrill and fierce in accent!—Fear it
not:

For they Earth's fairest daughters do
excel;

Pure undecaying beauty is their lot;
Their voices into liquid music swell,

Thrilling each pearly cleft and sparry
grot,

The undisturbed abodes where Sea-
nymphs dwell!

II

BRUGÈS

BRUGÈS I saw attired with golden light
(Streamed from the west) as with a robe
of power:

The splendour fled; and now the sunless
hour,

That, slowly making way for peaceful
night,

Best suits with fallen grandeur, to my
sight

Offers the beauty, the magnificence,
And sober graces, left her for defence

Against the injuries of time, the spite
Of fortune, and the desolating storms

Of future war. Advance not—spare to
hide,

O gentle Power of darkness! these mild
hues;

Obscure not yet these silent avenues
Of stateliest architecture, where the
Forms
Of nun-like females, with soft motion,
glide!

III

BRUGÈS

The Spirit of Antiquity—enshrined
In sumptuous buildings, vocal in sweet
song.

In picture, speaking with heroic tongue,
And with devout solemnities entwined—
Mounts to the seat of grace within the
mind:

Hence Forms that glide with swan-like
ease along,

Hence motions, even amid the vulgar
[throng,

To an harmonious decency confined:
As if the streets were consecrated ground,

The city one vast temple, dedicate
To mutual respect in thought and deed:

To leisure, to forbearances sedate;
To social cares from jarring passions
freed;

A deeper peace than that in deserts found.

IV

INCIDENT AT BRUGÈS

In Bruges town is many a street—
Whence busy life hath fled;

Where, without hurry, noiseless feet,
The grass-grown pavement tread.

There heard we, halting in the shade
Flung from a Convent-tower,

A harp that tuneful prelude made
To a voice of thrilling power.

The measure, simple truth to tell
Was fit for some gay throng;

Though from the same grim turret fell
The shadow and the song.

When silent were both voice and chords,
The strain seemed doubly dear,

Yet sad as sweet,—for English words
Had fallen upon the ear.

It was a breezy hour of eve;
 And pinnacle and spire
 Quivered and seemed almost to heave,
 Clothed with innocuous fire;
 But, where we stood, the setting sun
 Showed little of his state;
 And, if the glory reached the Nun,
 'Twas through an iron grate.
 Not always is the heart unwise.
 Nor pity idly born,
 If even a passing Stranger sighs
 For them who do not mourn.
 Sad is thy doom, self-solaced dove,
 Captive, whoe'er thou be!
 Oh! what is beauty, what is love,
 And opening life to thee?
 Such feeling pressed upon my soul,
 A feeling sanctified
 By one soft-trickling tear that stole
 From the Maiden at my side;
 Less tribute could she pay than this,
 Borne gaily o'er the sea,
 Fresh from the beauty and the bliss
 Of English liberty?

V

AFTER VISITING THE FIELD OF WATERLOO
 A WINGED Goddess—clothed in vesture
 wrought
 Of rainbow colours: One whose port
 was bold,
 Whose overburthened hand could scarcely
 hold
 The glittering crowns and garlands which
 it brought—
 Hovered in air above the far-famed Spot.
 She vanished; leaving prospect blank
 and cold
 Of wind-swept corn that wide around
 us rolled
 In dreary billows, wood, and meagre cot.
 And monuments that soon must disap-
 pear:
 Yet a dread local recompense we found:
 While glory seemed betrayed, while
 patriot-zeal
 Sank in our hearts, we felt as men
 should feel
 With such vast hoards of hidden carnage
 near,
 And horror breathing from the silent
 ground!

VI

BETWEEN NAMUR AND LIEGE
 What lovelier home could gentle Fancy
 choose?
 Is this the stream, whose cities, heights,
 and plains,
 War's favourite playground, are with
 crimson stains
 Familiar, as the Morn with pearly dew?

The Morn, that now, along the silver
 MEUSE,
 Spreading her peaceful ensigns, calls the
 swains
 To tend their silent boats and ringing
 wains,
 Or strip the bough whose mellow fruit
 bestrewn
 The ripening corn beneath it. As mine
 eyes
 Turn from the fortified and threatening
 hill,
 How sweet the prospect of yon watery
 glade,
 With its grey rocks clustering in pensive
 shade—
 That, shaped like old monastic turrets,
 rise
 Above the smooth meadow-ground,
 serene and still!

VII

AIX-LA-CHAPELLE

Was it to disenchant, and to undo,
 That we approached the Seat of Charle-
 name?
 To sweep from many an old romantic
 strain
 That faith which no devotion may renew?
 Why does this puny Church pre-ent to
 view
 Her feeble columns? and that scanty
 choir!
 This sword that one of our weak times
 might wear!
 Objects of false pretence, or meanly true:
 If from a traveller's fortune I might
 claim
 A palpable memorial of that day,
 Then would I seek the Pyrenean Breach
 That ROLAND clove with huge two-
 handed sway,
 And to the enormous labour left his
 name,
 Where unremitting frosts the rocky
 crescent breach.

VIII

IN THE CATHEDRAL AT COLOGNE

O for the help of Angels to complete
 This temple—Angels governed by a plan
 Thus far pursued (how gloriously!) by
 Man,
 Studious that He might not disdain the
 Seat
 Who dwells in heaven! But that aspir-
 ing heat
 Hath failed; and now, ye Powers!
 whose gorgeous wings
 And splendid aspect yon emblazonings
 But faintly picture, 'twere an office meet
 For you, on these unfinished shafts to try
 The midnight virtues of your harmony:—

This vast design might tempt you to repeat
 Strains that call forth upon empyreal ground,
 Immortal Fabrics, rising to the sound
 Of penetrating harps and voices sweet !

IX

IN A CARRIAGE, UPON THE BANKS OF THE RHINE

AMID this dance of objects sadness steals
 O'er the defrauded heart—while sweeping by.

As in a fit of Thespian jollity,
 Beneath her vine-leaf crown the green Earth reels :

Backward, in rapid evanescence, wheels
 The venerable pageantry of Time,
 Each beetling rampart, and each tower sublime

And what the Dell unwillingly reveals
 Of lurking cloistral arch, through trees espied

Near the bright River's edge. Yet why repeat ?

To muse, to creep, to halt at will, to gaze—

Such sweet way-faring—of life's spring the pride,

Her summer's faithful joy—that still is mine,

And in fit measure cheers autumnal days.

X

HYMN

FOR THE BOATMEN, AS THEY APPROACH THE RAPIDS UNDER THE CASTLE OF HEIDELBERG

Jesus ! bless our slender Boat ;
 By the current swept along ;
 Loud its threatenings—let them not
 Drown the music of a song
 Breathed thy mercy to implore,
 Where these troubled waters roar !

Saviour, for our warning, seen
 Bleeding on the precious Rood ;
 If, while through the meadows green
 Gently wound the peaceful flood,
 We forgot Thee, do not Thou
 Disregard thy Suppliants now !

Hither, like yon ancient Tower
 Watching o'er the river's bed,
 Flung the shadow of thy power,
 Else we sleep among the dead ;
 Thou who trod'st the billowy sea,
 Shield us in our jeopardy !

Guide our Bark among the waves ;
 Through the rocks our passage smooth :

Where the whirlpool frets and raves
 Let thy love its anger soothe :
 All our hope is placed in Thee ;
*Miserere Domine !*¹

XI

THE SOURCE OF THE DANUBE

Not, like his great Compeers, indig-
 nantly

Doth DANUBE spring to life !² The
 wandering Stream

(Who loves the Cross, yet to the Cres-
 cent's gleam

Unfolds a willing breast) with infant glee
 Slips from his prison walls : and Fancy,
 free

To follow in his track of silver light.
 Mounts on rapt wing, and with a
 moment's flight

Hath reached the encumbrance of that
 gloomy sea

Whose waves the Orphean lyre forbade
 to meet

In conflict : whose rough winds forgot
 their jars

To wait the heroic progeny of Greece :
 When the first Ship sailed for the Golden
 Fleece—

ARGO—exalted for that daring feat
 To fix in heaven her shape distinct with
 stars.

XII

ON APPROACHING THE STAUER-BACH,
LAUTERBRUNNEN

UTTERED by whom, or how inspired—
 designed

For what strange service, does this con-
 cert reach

Our ears, and near the dwellings of
 mankind !

Mid fields familiarized to human
 speech ?—

No Mermaids warble—to allay the wind
 Driving some vessel toward a dangerous
 beach—

More thrilling melodies : Witch answer-
 ing Witch,

To chant a love-spell, never intertwined
 Notes shrill and wild with art more musi-
 cal :

Alas ! that from the lips of abject Want
 Or Idleness in tatters mendicant

The strain should flow—free Fancy to
 enthral,

And with regret and useless pity haunt
 This bold, this bright, this sky-born,
 WATERFALL !³

² See Note.

¹ See Note.

³ See Note.

XIII

THE FALL OF THE AAR—HANDEL
FROM the fierce aspect of this River,
throwing

His giant body o'er the steep rock's brink,
Back in astonishment and fear we shrink:
But, gradually a calmer look bestowing,
Flowers we espy beside the torrent

growing:
Flowers that peep forth from many a
cleft and chink.

And, from the whirlwind his anger,
drink

Hues ever fresh, in rocky fortress blowing:

They suck—from breath that, threaten-
ing to destroy,

Is more benignant than the dewy eve-
Beauty, and life, and motions as of joy:
Nor doubt but He to whom you Pine-
trees nod

[God,
There heads in sign of worship, Nature's
These humbler adorations will receive.

XIV
MEMORIAL

NEAR THE OUTLET OF THE LAKE OF THUN

"DEM
ANDENKEN
MEINER FREUNDEN
ALOYS RÖDING
MDCCCLXVIII"

Aloys Röding, it will be remembered, was
Captain-General of the Swiss forces, which,
with a courage and perseverance worthy of
the cause, opposed the flagitious and too
successful attempt of Buonaparte to subju-
gate their country.

AROUND a wild and woody hill
A gravelled pathway treading.
We reached a votive Stone that bears
The name of Aloys Röding.

Well judged the Friend who placed it
there

For silence and protection:
And haply with a finer care
Of dutiful affection.

The Sun regards it from the West;
And, while in summer glory
He sets, his sinking yields a type
Of that pathetic story:

And oft he tempts the patriot Swiss
Amid the grove to linger:
Till all is dun, save this bright Stone
Touched by his golden finger.

XV

COMPOSED IN ONE OF THE CATHOLIC
CANTONS

DOOMED as we are our native dust
To wet with many a bitter shower,

It ill befits us to disdain
The altar, to deride the fane,
Where simple Sufferers bend, in trust
To win a happier hour.

I love, where spreads the village lawn,
Upon some knee-worn cell to gaze:
Hail to the firm unmoving cross,
Aloft, where pines their branches toss!
And to the chapel far withdrawn,
That lurks by lonely ways!

Where'er we roam—along the brink
Of Rhine—or by the sweeping Po,
Through Alpine vale, or champain wide,
Whatever we look on, at our side
Be Charity!—to bid us think,
And feel, if we would know.

XVI

AFTER-THOUGHT

On Life! without thy chequered scene
Of right and wrong, of weal and woe,
Success and failure, 'toud a ground
For magnanimity be found;
For faith, 'mid ruined hopes, serene?
Or whence could virtue flow?

Pain entered through a ghastly breach—
Nor while sin lasts must effort cease:
Heaven upon earth's an empty boast;
But, for the bowers of Eden lost,
Mercy has placed within our reach
A portion of God's peace.

XVII

SCENE ON THE LAKE OF BRIENZ

"WHAT know we of the Blest above
But that they sing and that they love?"
Yet, if they ever did inspire
A mortal hymn, or shaped the choir,
Now, where those harvest Damsels float
Homeward in their rugged Boat,
(While all the rustling winds are fled—
Each slumbering on some mountain's
head)

Now, surely, hath that gracious aid
Been felt, that influence is displayed.
Pupils of Heaven, in order stand
The rustic Maidens, every hand
Upon a Sister's shoulder laid,—
To chant, as glides the boat along,
A simple, but a touching, song;
To chant, as Angels do above,
The melodies of Peace and love!

XVIII

ENGELBERG, THE HILL OF ANGELS.¹

FOR gentlest uses, oft-times Nature takes
The work of Fancy from her willing
hands;

And such a beautiful creation makes

¹ See Note.

As renders needless spells and magic wands,
And for the boldest tale belief commands.

When first mine eyes beheld that famous Hill

The sacred ENGELBERG, celestial Bands,
With intermingling motions soft and still,

Hung round its top, on wings that changed their hues at will.

Clouds do not name those Visitants ;
they were

The very Angels whose authentic lays,
 Sung from that heavenly ground in middle air,

Made known the spot where piety should raise
praise.

A holy Structure to the Almighty's
Resplendent Apparition ! if in vain

My ears did listen, 'twas enough to gaze ;
And watch the slow departure of the train,

Whose skirts the glowing Mountain
thirsted to detain.

XIX

OUR LADY OF THE SNOW

MEEK Virgin Mother, more benign
Than fairest Star, upon the height
Of thy own mountain, set to keep
Lone vigils through the hours of sleep,
What eye can look upon thy shrine
Untroubled at the sight ?

These crowded offerings as they hang
In sign of misery relieved,
Even these, without intent of theirs,
Report of comfortless despairs,
Of many a deep and cureless pang
And confidence deceived.

To Thee, in this aerial cleft,
As to a common centre, tend
All sufferers that no more rely
On mortal succour—all who sigh
And pine, of human hope bereft,
Nor wish for earthly friend.

And hence, O Virgin Mother mild !
Though pious flowers around thee
blow,

Not only from the dreary strife
Of Winter, but the storms of life,
Thee have thy votaries aptly styled,
OUR LADY OF THE SNOW.

Even for the Man who stops not here,
But down the irriguous valley hies,
Thy very name, O Lady ! flings,
O'er blooming fields and gushing springs
A tender sense of shadowy fear,
And chastening sympathies !

1 Mount Rigi.

Nor falls that intermingling shade
To summer-gladness unkind :
It chastens only to requite
With gleams of fresher, purer, light ;
While, o'er the flower-enamelled glade,
More sweetly breathes the wind.

But on !—a tempting downward way,
A verdant path before us lies ;
Clear shines the glorious sun above ;
Then give free course to joy and love,
Deeming the evil of the day
Sufficient to the wise.

XX

EFFUSION,

IN PRESENCE OF THE PAINTED TOWER OF TELL, AT ALTORF

This Tower stands upon the spot where grew
the Linden Tree against which his Son is said to
have been placed, when the Father's archery
was put to proof under circumstances so
famous in Swiss Story.

WHAT though the Italian pencil wrought
not here,

Nor such fine skill as did the need bestow
On Marathonian valour, yet the tear
Springs forth in presence of this gaudy
show.

While narrow cares their limits overflow,
Thrice happy, burghers, peasants, war-
riors old,

Infants in arms and ye, that as ye go
Home-ward or school-ward, aye what ye
behold ;

Heroes before your time, in frolic fancy
bold !

And when that calm Spectatress from
on high

Looks down—the bright and solitary
Moon,

Who never gazes but to beautify ;
And snow-led torrents, which the blaze
of noon

Roused into fury, murmur a soft tune
That fosters peace, and gentleness recalls :
Then might the passing Monk receive a
boon

Of saintly pleasure from these pictured
walls,

While, on the warlike groups, the mel-
lowing lustre falls.

How blest the souls who when their trials
come

Yield not to terror or despondency,
But face like that sweet Boy their mor-
tal doom,

Whose head the ruddy apple tops, while
he

Expectant stands beneath the linden tree :
He quakes not like the timid forest game,
But smiles—the hesitating shaft to free ;

Assured that Heaven its justice will
proclaim.

And to his Father give its own unerring
aim.

XXI

THE TOWN OF SCHWYTZ

By antique Fancy trimmed—though
lowly, bred

To dignity—in thee, O SCHWYTZ! are
seen

The genuine features of the golden
mean;

Equality by Prudence governed,
Or jealous Nature ruling in her stead;

And, therefore, art thou blest with peace,
serene

As that of the sweet fields and meadows
green

In unambitious compass round thee
spread,

Majestic BERNE, high on her guardian
steep,

Holding a central station of command,
Might well be styled this noble body's

HEAD:
Thou, lodged 'mid mountainous entrench-
ments deep,

Its HEART: and ever may the heroic
Land

Thy name, O SCHWYTZ, in happy freedom
keep!

XXII

ON HEARING THE "RANZ DES VACHES"
ON THE TOP OF THE PASS OF ST.
GOTHARD

I LISTEN—but no faculty of mine
Avails those modulations to detect.

Which heard in foreign lands, the Swiss
affect

With tenderest passion: leaving him to
pine

(So fame reports) and die,—his sweet-
breath'd kine

Remembering, and green Alpine pastures
decked

With vernal flowers. Yet may we not
reject

The tale as fabulous.—Here
Mindful how others breathe

Are moved, etc., by this simple Strain
rare

Of God—
Of God himself from dread pre-emin-
ence—

Aspiring thoughts, by memory reclaimed,
Yield to the Muse's touching influence

And joys of distant home my heart en-
chain.

1 Nearly 500 years (says Ebel, speaking of the
French invasion,) had elapsed, when, for the
first time, foreign soldiers were seen upon the
frontiers of this small Canton, to impose upon
it the laws of their governors.

XXIII

FORT FUENTES

The Ruins of Fort Fuentes form the crest of
a rocky eminence that rises from the plain at
the head of the lake of Corno, commanding
views up the Valtelline, and toward the town of
Chiavenna. The prospect in the latter direction
is characterised by melancholy sublimity. We
rejoiced at being favoured with a distinct view
of those Alpine heights; not, as we had expected
from the breaking up of the storm, steeped in
celestial glory, yet in communion with clouds
floating or stationary—scatterings from heaven.
The Ruin is interesting both in mass and in
detail. An Inscription, upon elaborately-sculptured
marble lying on the ground, records that
the Fort had been erected by Count Fuentes in
the year 1600, during the reign of Philip the
Third; and the Chapel, about twenty years
after, by one of his Descendants. Marble
pillars of gateways are yet standing, and a con-
siderable part of the Chapel walls; a smooth
green turf has taken place of the pavement, and
we could see no trace of altar or image; but
everywhere something to remind one of former
splendour, and of devastation and tumult. In
our ascent we had passed abundance of wild
vines intermingled with bushes: near the ruins
were some ill-tended, but growing willingly;
and rock, turf, and fragments of the pile, are
alike covered or adorned with a variety of
flowers, among which the rose-coloured pink
was giving in great beauty. While descend-
ing, we discovered on the ground, a part from
the path, and at a considerable distance from
the ruined Chapel, a statue of a Child in pure
white marble, uninjured by the explosion that
had driven it so far down the hill. "How
little," we exclaimed, "are these things valued
here! Could we but transport this pretty
image to our own garden!"—Yet it seemed it
would have been a pity any one should remove
it from its couch in the wilderness, which may
be its own for hundreds of years.—*Extract from
Journal.*

DREAD HOUR! when, upheaved by war's
sulphurous blast,

This sweet-visaged Cherub of Parian
stone

So far from the holy enclosure was cast,
To couch in this thicket of brambles
alone.

To rest where the lizard may bask in the
palm

Of his half-open hand pure from blem-
ish or speck;

And the green, gilded snake, without
troubling the calm

Of the beautiful countenance, twine
round his neck;

Where haply (kind service to Piety due!)
When winter the grove of its mantle
bereaves,

Some bird (like our own honoured red-
breast) may strew

The desolate Slumberer with moss and
with leaves.

FUENTES once harboured the good and
the brave,
Nor to her was the dance of soft plea-
sure unknown ; [wave
Her banners for festal enjoyment did
While the thrall of her fires thro' the
mountains was blown :

Now gads the wild vine o'er the pathless
ascent ; — [sway,
O silence of Nature, how deep is thy
When the whirlwind of human destruc-
tion is spent.

Our tumults appeased, and our strife
passed away !

XXIV

THE CHURCH OF SAN SALVADOR, SEEN
FROM THE LAKE OF LUGANO

This Church was almost destroyed by lightning
a few years ago, but the altar and the
of the Patron Saint were untouched. The
Mount, upon the summit of which the Church
is built, stands amid the intricacies of the
Lake of Lugano ; and is, from a hundred
points of view, its principal ornament, rising
to the height of 2,000 feet, and, on one side,
nearly perpendicular. The ascent is
some ; but the traveller who performs it
will be amply rewarded. Splendid fertility,
rich woods and dazzling waters, seclusion and
confinement of view contrasted with sea-
like extent of plain fading into the sky ; and
this again, in an opposite quarter, with an
horizon of the loftiest and boldest Alps — unite
in composing a prospect more diversified by
magnificence, beauty, and sublimity, than per-
haps any other point in Europe, of so incon-
siderable an elevation, commands.

Thou sacred Pile ! whose turrets rise
From yon steep mountain's loftiest stage,
Guarded by lone San Salvador ;
Sink (if thou must) as heretofore,
To sulphurous bolts a sacrifice,
But ne'er to human rage !

On Horeb's top, on Sinai, deigned
To rest the universal Lord :
Why leap the fountains from their cells
Where everlasting Bounty dwells ? —
That, while the Creature is sustained,
His God may be adored.

Cliffs, fountains, rivers, seasons, times —
Let all remind the soul of heaven ;
Our slack devotion needs them all ;
And Faith — so oft of sense the thrall,
While she, by aid of Nature, clumbs —
May hope to be forgiven.

Glory, and patriotic Love,
And all the Poms of this frail "spot
Which men call Earth," have yearned to
seek,
Associate with the simply meek,
Religion in the sainted grove,
And in the hallowed grot.

W.P.

Thither, in time of adverse shocks,
Of fainting hopes and backward wills,
Did mighty Tell repair of old —
A Hero cast in Nature's mould,
Deliverer of the steadfast rocks
And of the ancient hills !

He, too, of battle-martyrs chief !
Who, to recall his daunted peers,
For victory shaped an open space,
By gathering with a wide embrace,
To his single breast, a sheaf
Of fatal Austrian spears.¹

XXV

THE ITALIAN ITINERANT, AND THE SWISS
GOATHERD

PART I

Now that the farewell tear is dried,
Heaven prosper thee, be hope thy guide !
Hope be thy guide, adventurous Boy ;
The wages of thy travel, joy !
Whether for London bound — to trill
Thy mountain notes with simple skill ;
Or on thy head to poise a show
Of Images in seemly row ;
The graceful form of milk-white Steed,¹
Or Bird that soared with Ganymede ;
Or through our hamlets thou wilt bear
The sightless Milton, with his hair
Around his placid temples curled ;
And Shakespeare at his side — a freight,
If clay could think and mind were weight,
For him who bore the world !
Hope be thy guide, adventurous Boy ;
The wages of thy travel, joy !

II

But thou, perhaps, (alert as free
Though serving sage philosophy)
Wilt ramble over hill and dale,
A Vendor of the well-wrought Scale,
Whose sentient tube instructs to time
A pittance to a fickle clime :
Whether thou choose this useful part,
Or minister to huer art, [dream,
Though robbed of many a cherished
And crossed by many a shattered scheme,
What stirring wonders wilt thou see
In the proud Isle of liberty !
Yet will the Wanderer sometimes pine
With thoughts which no delights can
chase,
Recall a Sister's last embrace,
His Mother's neck entwined ;
Nor shall forget the Maiden coy
That would have loved the bright-haired
Boy !

¹ Arnold Winkelried, at the battle of Sem-
pach, broke an Austrian phalanx in this manner.
The event is one of the most famous in the annals
of Swiss heroism ; and pictures and prints of it
are frequent throughout the country.

T

III

My Song, encouraged by the grace
That beams from his ingenuous face.
For this Adventurer scruples not
To prophesy a golden lot ;
Due recompence, and safe return
To Como's steeps—his happy bourne !
Where he, aloft in garden glade,
Shall tend, with his own dark-eyed Maid,
The towering maize, and prop the twig
That ill supports the luscious fig ;
Or feed his eye in paths sun-proof
With purple of the trellis-roof,
That through the jealous leaves escapes
From Cadenabbia's pendent grapes.
—Oh might he tempt that Goatherd child

To share his wanderings ! him whose look
Even yet my heart can scarcely brook,
So touchingly he smiled —
As with a rapture caught from heaven—
For unasked alms in pity given.

PART II

I

With nodding plumes, and lightly drest
Like foresters in leaf-green vest,
The Helvetian Mountaineers, on ground
For Tell's dread archery renowned,
Before the target stood—to claim
The guerdon of the steadiest aim.
Loud was the rifle-gun's report—
A startling thunder quick and short !
But, flying through the heights around,
Echo prolonged a tell-tale sound
Of hearts and hands alike "prepared."
The treasures they enjoy to guard !
And, if there be a favoured hour
When Heroes are allowed to quit
The tomb, and on the clouds to sit
With tutelary power,
On their Descendants shedding grace—
This was the hour, and that the place.

II

But Truth inspired the Bards of old
When of an iron age they told,
Which to unequal laws gave birth,
And drove Astraea from the earth.
—A gentle Boy (perchance with blood
As noble as the best endued,
But seemingly a Thing despised :
Even by the sun and air unpriized
For not a tinge or flowery streak
Appeared upon his tender cheek)
Heart-deaf to those rebounding notes, &
Apart, beside his silent goats,
Sate watching in a forest shed,
Pale, ragged, with bare feet and head ;
Mute as the snow upon the hill,
And as the saint he prays to, still.
Ah, what avails heroic deed ?

What liberty ? if no defence
Be won for feeble Innocence.
Fathers of all ! though wilful Manhood
—read
His punishment in soul-distress,
Grant to the morn of life its natural
blessedness !

XXVI

THE LAST SUPPER, BY LEONARDO¹ DA VINCI, IN THE REFECTORY OF THE CONVENT OF MARIA DELLA GRAZIA—MILAN

Thy searching damps and many an
envious flaw
Have marred this Work ; the calm
ethereal grace,
The love deep-seated in the Saviour's
face,
Thy mercy, goodness, have not failed to
awe
The Elements : as they do melt and
baw
The heart of the Beholder—and erase
(At least for one rapt moment) every
trace

Of disobedience to the 'prima' law
The annunciation of the dreadful truth
Made to the Twelve, survives : lip, forehead,
cheek,
And hand reposing on the board in ruth
Of what it utters, while the ungully seek
Unquestionable meanings—still bespeak
A labour worthy of eternal youth !

XXVII

THE ECLIPSE OF THE SUN
1820

Hight on her speculative tower
Stood Science waiting for the hour
When Sol was destined to endure
That darkening of his radiant face
Which Superstition strove to chase,
Erewhile, with rites impure.

Afloat beneath Italian skies,
Through regions fair as Paradise
We gaily passed,—till Nature wrought
A silent and unlooked-for change,
That checked the desultory range
Of joy and sprightly thought.

Where'er was dipped the toiling oar,
The waves danced round us as before,
As lightly, though of altered hue,
Mid recent coolness, such as falls
At noontide from umbrageous walls
That screen the morning dew.

No vapour stretched its wings ; no cloud
Cast far or near a murky shroud :
The sky an azure field displayed ;

¹ See Note,

'Twas sunlight sheathed and gently
 charmed,
 Of all its sparkling rays disarmed,
 And as in slumber laid,—

Or something night and day between
 Like moonshine—but the hue was green :
 Still moonshine, without shadow, spread
 On jutting rock, and curved shore.
 Where gazed the peasant from his door
 And on the mountain's head.

It tinged the Julian steeps—! lay,
 Lugano ! on thy ample bay :
 The solemnizing veil was drawn
 O'er villas, terraces, and towers :
 To Albogasio's olive bowers,
 Porlezza's verdant lawn.

But Fancy with the speed of fire
 Hath past to Milan's loftiest spire,
 And there alights 'mid that aerial host
 Of Figures human and divine,
 White as the snows of Apennine
 Indurated by frost.

Awe-stricken she beholds the array
 That guards the Temple night and day,
 Angels she sees—that might from heaven
 have flown.

And Virgin-saints, who flit in vain
 Have striven by purity to gain
 The beatific crown—

Sees long-drawn fins, concentric rings
 Each narrowing above each ;—the wings,
 The uplifted palms, the silent marble lips
 The starry zone of sovereign height—²
 All steeped in this portentous light !
 All suffering dim eclipse !

Thus after Man had fallen (if aught
 These perishable spheres have wrought
 May with that issue be compared)
 Throngs of celestial visages,
 Darkening like water in the breeze,
 A holy sadness shared.

Lo ! while I speak, the labouring Sun
 His glad deliverance has begun :
 The cypress waves her sombre plume
 More cheerily ; and town and tower,
 The vineyard and the olive-bower,
 Their lustre re-assume !

O Ye, who guard and grace my home
 While in far-distant lands we roam,
 What countenance hath this Day put on
 for you ?
 While we looked round with favoured
 eyes,
 Did sullen mists hide lake and skies
 And mountains from your view ?

¹ See Note.

² Above the highest circle of figures is a zone
 of metallic stars

Or was it given you to behold
 Like vision, pensive though not cold,
 From the smooth breast of gay Winan
 derviere ?

Saw ye the soft yet awful veil
 Spread over Grasmere's lovely dale,
 Helvellyn's brow severe ?

I ask in vain—and know far less
 If sickness, sorrow, or distress
 Have spared my dwelling to this hour ;
 Sad blindness ! but ordained to prove
 Our faith in Heaven's unfailing love
 And all-controlling power.

XXVIII

THE THREE COTTAGE GIRLS

I

How blest the Maid whose heart—yet,
 free
 From Love's uneasy sovereignty—
 Beats with a fancy running high,
 Her simple cares to magnify :
 Whom Labour, never urged to toil,
 Hath cherished on a healthful soil ;
 Who knows not pomp, who heeds not
 self ;
 Whose heaviest sin it is to look
 Askance upon her pretty Self
 Reflected in some crystal brook ;
 Whom grief hath spared— who sheds no
 tear
 But in sweet pity ; and can hear
 Another's praise from envy clear.

II

Such (but O lavish Nature ! why
 That dark unfathomable eye,
 Where lurks a spirit that replies
 To stillest mood of softest skies,
 Yet hunts at peace to be o'erthrown,
 Another's first, and then her own ?)
 Such, haply, yon ITALIAN Maid,
 Our Lady's laggard Votress,
 Halting beneath the chestnut shade
 To accomplish there her loveliness :
 Nice and maternal fingers lend :
 A Sister serves with slacker hand ;
 Then, glittering like a star, she joins the
 festal band.

III

How blest (if truth may entertain
 Coy fancy with a bolder strain)
 The HELVETIAN Girl—who daily braves,
 In her light skiff, the tossing waves,
 And quits the bosom of the deep
 Only to climb the rugged steep !
 —Say whence that modulated shout !
 From Wood-nymph of Diana's throng ?
 Or does the greeting to a rout
 Of giddy Bacchanals belong ?
 Jubilant outcry ! rock and glade

Resounded—but the voice obeyed
The breath of an Helvetian Maid.

IV

Her beauty dazzles the thick wood ;
Her courage animates the flood ;
Her steps the elastic green-sward meets
Returning unreluctant sweets ;
The mountains (as ye heard) rejoice
Aloud, saluted by her voice !
Blithe Paragon of Alpine grace,
Be as thou art—for through thy veins
The blood of Heroes runs its race
And nobly wilt thou brook the chains
That, for the virtuous, Life prepares ;
The fetters which the Matron wears ;
The patriot Mother's weight of anxious
cares !

V

" Sweet HIGHLAND Girl ! ' a very shower
Of beauty was thy earthly dower."
When thou didst flit before mine eyes,
Gay Vision under sullen skies,
While Hope and Love around thee played,
Near the rough falls of Inverness,
Have they, who nursed the blossom, seen
No breach of promise in the fruit ?
Was joy, in following joy, as keen
As grief can be in grief's pursuit ?
When youth had flown did hope still
bless
Thy goings—or the cheerfulness
Of innocence survive to mitigate dis-
tress ?

VI

But, from our course why turn—to tread
A way with shadows overspread ;
Where what we gladliest would believe
Is feared as what may most deceive ?
Bright Spirit, not with amaranth crowned
But heath-bells from thy native ground.
Time cannot thin thy flowing hair
Nor take one ray of light from Thee ;
For in my Fancy thou dost share
The gift of immortality ;
And there shall bloom, with Thee allied,
The Votress by Lugano's side ;
And that intrepid Nymph, on Uri's steep,
descried !

XXIX

THE COLUMN INTENDED BY BUONAPARTE
FOR A TRIUMPHAL EDIFICE IN MILAN,
NOW LYING BY THE WAYSIDE IN THE
SIMPLON PASS

AMBITION—following down this far-
famed slope
Her Pioneer, the snow-dissolving Sun,
While clariions prate of kingdoms to be
won—

1 See address to a Highland Girl, p. 232.

Perchance, in future ages, here may stop ;
Taught to mistrust her flattering horo-
scape

By admonition from this prostrate Stone !
Memento uninscribed of Pride, o'er-
thrown :
Vanity's hieroglyphic ; a choice trope
In Fortune's rhetoric. Daughter of the
Rock,
Rest where thy course was stayed By
Power divine !
The Soul transported sees, from hint of
thine,
Crimes which the great Avenger's hand
provoke.
Hears combats whistling o'er the ensan-
guined heath :
What groans ! what shrieks ! what quiet-
ness in death !

XXX

STANZAS

COMPOSED IN THE SIMPLON PASS

VALOMBROSA ! I longed in thy shadiest
wood
To slumber, reclined on the moss-covered
floor,
To listen to Aëte's precipitous flood,
When the stillness of evening hath deep-
ened its roar,
To range through the Temples of Pæ-
stum, to muse
In Pompeii preserved by her burial in
earth ;
On pictures to gaze where they drank in
their hues ;
And murmur sweet songs on the ground
of their birth !
The beauty of Florence, the grandeur of
Rome,
Could I leave them unseen, and not yield
to regret ?
With a hope (and no more) for a season to
come,
Which ne'er may discharge the magnifi-
cent debt ?
Thou fortunate Region ! whose Greatness
inured
Awoke to new life from its ashes and
dust ;
Twice-glorified fields ! if in sadness I
turned
From your infinite marvels, the sadness
was just.
Now, risen ere the light-footed Chamois
retires
From dew-sprinkled grass to heights
guarded with snow,
Toward the mists that hang over the
land of my Sires, [I go,
From the climate of myrtles contented

My thoughts become bright like yon
edging of Pines

On the steep's lofty verge : how it black-
en'd the air !

But, touched from behind by the Sun,
it now shines

With threads that seem part of his own
silver hair.

Though the toil of the way with dear
Friends we divide,

Though by the same zephyr our temples
be fanned

As we rest in the cool orange-bowers side
by side,

A yearning survives which few hearts
shall withstand :

Each step hath its value while homeward
we move :—

O joy when the girdle of England appears !
What moment in life is so conscious of
love,

Of love in the heart made more happy by
tears ?

XXXI

ECHO, UPON THE GEMMI
WHAT beast of chase hath broken from
the cover ?

Stern GEMMI listens to as full a cry,
As multitudinous a harmony

Of sounds as rang the heights of Tatmos
over,

When, from the soft couch of her sleeping
Lover,

Up-starting, Cynthia skimmed the moun-
tain-dew

In keen pursuit—and gave, where'er
she flew,

Impetuous motion to the Stars above her.
A solitary Wolf-dog, ranging on

Through the bleak concave, wakes this
wondrous chime

Of airy voices locked in unison,—
Faint—far-off—near—deep—solemn and
sublime !—

So, from the body of one guilty deed,
A thousand ghostly fears, and haunting
thoughts, proceed !

XXXII

PROCESSIONS

SUGGESTED ON A SABBATH MORNING IN
THE VALE OF CHAMOONY

To appease the Gods ; or public thanks
to yield :

Or to solicit knowledge of events,
Which in her breast Futurity concealed ;

And that the past might have its true
intent

Feelingly told by living monuments—
Mankind of yore were prompted to devise

Rites such as yet Persepolis presents

Graven on her cankered walls, solemn-
ities

That moved in long array before admir-
ing eyes.

The Hebrews thus, carrying in joyful
state

Thick boughs of palm, and willows from
the brook,

Marched round the altar—to commem-
orate

How, when their course they through
the desert took,

Guided by signs which ne'er the sky
forgot,

They lodged in leafy tents and cabins
low.

Green boughs were borne, while, for the
blast that shook

Down to the earth the walls of Jericho,
Shouts rise, and storms of sound from
lifted trumpets blow !

And thus, in order, 'mid the sacred grove
Fed in the Libyan waste by gushing wells,

The priests and damsels of Ammonian
Jove

Provoked responses with shrill canticles :
While, in a ship begirt with silver bells,

They round his altar bore the horned God,
Old Cham, the solar Deity, who dwells

Aloft, yet in a tilting vessel rode,
When universal sea the mountains over-
flowed.

Why speak of Roman Poms ? the
haughty claims

Of Chiefs triumphant after ruthless wars ;
The feast of Neptune—and the Cereal

Games,
With images, and crowns, and empty
cars :

The dancing Salii—on the shields of Mars
Smiting with fury : and a deeper dread

Scattered on all sides by the hideous jars
Of Corybantian cymbals, while the head

Of Cybelè was seen, sublimely turreted !

At length a spirit more subdued and soft
Appeared—to govern Christian pageant-
ries :

The Cross, in calm procession, borne
aloft

Moved to the chant of sober litanies.
Even such, this day, came wafted on the

breeze
From a long train—in hooded vestments
fair

Enwrap—and winding, between Alpine
trees

Spiry and dark, around their House of
prayer,

Below the icybed of bright ARGENTIERE.

Still in the vivid freshness of a dream,
The pageant haunts me as it met our eyes!
Still, with those white-robed Shapes—a
 living Stream,
The glacier Pillars join in solemn guise!
For the same service, by mysterious ties;
Numbers exceeding credible account
Of number, pure and silent Votaries
Issuing or issued from a wintry fount:
The impenetrable heart of that exalted
 Mount!

They, too, who send so far a holy gleam
While they the Church enbird with motion
 Slow,

A product of that awful Mountain seem,
Poured from his vaults of everlasting
 snow;

Not virgin lilies marshalled in bright row,
Not swans descending with the stealthy
 tide,

A livelier sisterly resemblance show
Than the fair Fornis, that in long order
 glide.

Bear to the glacier band—those Shapes
aloft descried.

Trembling, I look upon the secret springs
Of that licentious craving in the mind
To act the God among external things,
To blind, on apt suggestion, or unblind:
And marvel not that antique Faith
 inclined

To crowd the world with metamorphosis.
Vouchsafed in pity or in wrath assigned;
Such insolent temptations wouldst thou
 miss,

Avoid these sights: nor brood o'er
Fable's dark abyss!

XXXIII

ELEGIAC STANZAS

The lamented Youth whose untimely death
gave occasion to these elegiac verses, was
Frederick William Goddard, from Boston in
North America. He was in his twentieth year,
and had resided for some time with a clergyman
in the neighbourhood of Geneva for the com-
pletion of his education. Accompanied by a
fellow-pupil, a native of Scotland, he had just
set out on a Swiss tour when it was his mis-
fortune to fall in with a friend of mine who was
hastening to join our party. The travellers,
after spending a day together on the road from
Berne and at Soleure, took leave of each other
at night, the young men having intended to
proceed directly to Zurich. But early in the
morning my friend found his new acquaintances,
who were informed of the object of his journey,
and the friends he was in pursuit of, equipped
to accompany him. We met at Lucerne the
succeeding evening, and Mr. G. and his fellow-
student became in consequence our travelling
companions for a couple of days. We ascended
the Right together; and, after contemplating
the sunrise from that noble mountain, we sepa-

rated at an hour and on a spot well suited to the
parting of those who were to meet no more.
Our party descended through the valley of our
Lady of the Snow, and our late companions, to
Art. We had hoped to meet in a few weeks at
Geneva; but on the third succeeding day (on
the 21st of August) Mr. Goddard perished, being
overset in a boat while crossing the lake of
Zurich. His companion saved himself by
swimming, and was hospitably received in the
mansion of a Swiss gentleman (M. Keller) situ-
ated on the eastern coast of the lake. The
corpse of poor Goddard was cast ashore on the
estate of the same gentleman, who generously
performed all the rites of hospitality which could
be rendered to the dead as well as to the living.
He caused a handsome mural monument to be
erected in the church of Küssnacht, which re-
cords the premature fate of the young American,
and on the shores too of the lake the traveller
may read an inscription pointing out the spot
where the body was deposited by the waves.

Lured by the sound of pastoral bells,
Rude Nature's Pilgrims did we go,
From the dread summit of the Queen
Of mountains, through a deep ravine,
Where, in her holy chapel, dwells
 "Our Lady of the Snow."

The sky was blue, the air was mild;
Free were the streams and green the
 bowers;

As if, to rough assaults unknown,
The genial spot had ever shown
A countenance that as sweetly smiled—
The face of summer-hours.

And we were gay, our hearts at ease;
With pleasure dancing through the
 frame

We journeyed; all we knew of care—
Our path that straggled here and there:
Of trouble—but the fluttering breeze;
Of Winter—but a name.

If foresight could have rent the veil
Of three short days—but hush—no
 more!

Calm is the grave, and calmer none
Than that to which thy cares are gone,
Thou Victim of the stormy gale;
Asleep on ZURICH'S shore!

Oh GODDARD! what art thou?—a
 name—

A sunbeam followed by a shade!
Nor more, for aught that time supplies,
The great, the experienced, and the wise:
Too much from this frail earth we claim,
And therefore are betrayed.

We met, while festive mirth ran wild,
Where, from a deep lake's mighty urn,
Forth slips, like an enfranchised slave,
A sea-green river, proud to lave,
With current swift and undefiled,
The towers of old LUCERNE.

¹ See Note.

¹ Mount Right—Rogina Montium.

We parted upon solemn ground
Far-lifted towards the unfading sky:
But all our thoughts were then of Ear h,
That gives to common pleasures birth;
And nothing in our hearts we found
That prompted even a sigh.

Fetch, sympathising Powers of air,
Fetch, ye that post o'er seas and lands,
Herbs moistened by Virginian dew,
A most untimely grave to strew,
Whose turf may never know the care
Of kindred human hands!

Beloved by every gentle Muse
He left his Transatlantic home:
Europe, a realised romance,
Had opened on his eager glance:
What present bliss!—what golden
views!

What stores for years to come
Though lodged within no vigorous frame,
His soul her daily tasks renewed,
Blithe as the lark on sun-gilt wings
High poised—or as the wren that sings
In shady places, to proclaim
Her modest gratitude.

Not vain is sadly-uttered praise:
The words of truth's memorial vow
Are sweet as morning fragrance shed
From flowers mid GOLDAU's ruins bred;
As evening's fondly-lingering rays,
On RIGHT's silent brow.

Lamented Youth! to thy cold clay
Fit obsequies the Stranger paid:
And piety shall guard the Stone
Which hath not left the spot unknown
Where the wild waves resigned their
prey—

And *that* which marks thy bed.

And, when thy Mother weeps for Thee,
Lost Youth! a solitary Mother;
This tribute from a casual Friend
A not unwelcome Aid may lend,
To feed the tender luxury,
The rising pang to smother.¹

XXXIV

SKY-PROSPECT—FROM THE PLAIN OF
FRANCE

Lo! in the burning west, the craggy nape
Of a proud Ararat! and, thereupon,

¹ The persuasion here expressed was not groundless. The first human consolation that the afflicted Mother felt, was derived from this tribute to her son's memory, a fact which the author learned, at his own residence, from her Daughter, who visited Europe some years afterwards.—Goldau is one of the villages desolated by the fall of part of the Mountain Rossberg.

The Ark, her melancholy voyage done!
You rampant cloud-mimics a lion's
shape:

There, combats a huge crocodile—agape
A golden spear to swallow! and that
brown

And massy grove, so near yon blazing
town.

Stirs and recedes—destruction to es-
cape!

Yet all is harmless—as the Elysian
shades

Where Spirits dwell in undisturbed
repose—

Silently disappears, or quickly fades:
Meek Nature's evening comment on the
shows

That for oblivion take their daily birth
From all the fuming vanities of Earth!

XXXV

ON BEING STRANDED NEAR THE HARBOUR
OF BOULOGNE²

Why cast ye back upon the Gallic
shore

Ye furious waves! a patriotic Son
Of England—who in hope her coast had
won,

His project crowned, his pleasant travel
o'er?

Well—let him pace this noted beach
once more,

That gave the Roman his triumphal
shells:

That saw the Corsican his cap and bells
Haughtily shake, a dreaming Con-
queror!

Enough: my Country's cliffs I can
behold,

And proudly think, beside the chafing
sea,

Of checked ambition, tyranny controlled,
And folly cursed with endless memory:

These local recollections ne'er can cloy:
Such ground I from my very heart en-
joy!

XXXVI

AFTER LANDING—THE VALLEY OF DOVER
NOV., 1820

Where be the noisy followers of the
game

Which faction breeds: the turmoil
where? that passed

Through Europe, echoing from the
newsman's blast,

And filled our hearts with grief for
England's shame.

Peace greets us:—rambling on without
an aim

² See Note.

We mark majestic herds of cattle, free
 To ruminate, couched on the grassy lea;
 And hear far-off the mellow horn proclaim
 The Season's harmless pastime. Ruder
 sound
 Stirs not; enrapt I gaze with strange
 delight,
 While consciousnesses, not to be dis-
 owned,
 Here only serve a feeling to invite
 That lifts the spirit to a calmer height,
 And makes this rural stillness more
 profound.

XXXVII

AT DOVER

From the Pier's head, musing, and with
 increase
 Of wonder, I have watched this sea-side
 Town,
 Under the white cliff's battlemented
 crown,
 Hushed to a depth of more than Sabbath
 peace;
 The streets and quays are thronged, but
 why disown
 Their natural utterance: whence this
 strange release
 From social noise—silence elsewhere
 unknown?—
 A Spirit whispered, "Let all wonder
 cease,
 Ocean's overpowering murmurs have set
 free
 Thy sense from pressure of life's common
 din.
 As the dread voice that speaks from out
 the sea
 Of God's eternal Word, the Voice of
 Time
 Doth deaden shocks of tumult, shrieks of
 crime, [sin.]
 The shouts of folly, and the groans of

XXXVIII

DESULTORY STANZAS

UPON RECEIVING THE PRECEDING SHEETS
 FROM THE PRESS

Is then the final page before me spread,
 Nor further outlet left to mind or heart?
 Presumptuous Book! too forward to be
 read,
 How can I give thee licence to depart?
 One tribute more: unbidden feelings
 start
 Forth from their coverts; slighted
 objects rise;
 My spirit is the scene of such wild art
 As on Parnassus rules, when lightning
 flies,
 Visibly leading on the thunder's har-
 monies.

All that I saw returns upon my view,
 All that I heard comes back upon my
 ear,
 All that I felt this moment doth renew;
 And where the foot with no unmanly
 fear
 Recoiled—and wings alone could travel
 —there
 I move at ease; and meet contending
 themes
 That press upon me, crossing the career
 Of recollections vivid as the dreams
 Of midnight,—cities, plains, forests, and
 mighty streams.

Where Mortal ne'er breathed I dare to
 sit
 Among the interior Alps, gigantic crew,
 Who triumphed o'er diluvian power!—
 and yet
 What are they but a wreck and residue,
 Whose only business is to perish?—
 true
 To which end course, these wrinkled
 Souls of Time
 Labour their proper greatness to subdue;
 Speaking of death alone, beneath a clime
 Where life and Rapture flow in plenitude
 sublime.
 Fancy hath flung for me an airy bridge
 Across thy long deep Valley, furious
 Rhone!
 Arch that here rests upon the granite
 ridge
 Of Monte Rosa—there on frailer stone
 Of secondary birth, the Jung-frau's
 cone:
 And, from that arch, down-looking on
 the Vale
 The aspect I behold of every zone;
 A sea of foliage, tossing with the gale,
 Blithe Autumn's purple crown, and
 Winter's icy mail!

Far as St. Maurice, from yon eastern
 Forks,¹
 Down the main avenue my sight can
 range:
 And all its branchy vales, and all that
 lurks
 Within them, church, and town, and hut,
 and grange,
 For my enjoyment meet in vision
 strange:
 Knows torrents;—to the region's utmost
 bound,
 Life, Death, in amicable interchange;—
 But list! the avalanche—the hush
 profound
 That follows—yet more awful than that
 awful sound!

¹ At the head of the Vallais. See Note.

Is not the chamois suited to his place?
The eagle worthy of her ancestry?
—Let Empires fall; but ne'er shall Ye
disgrace

Your noble birthright, ye that occupy
Your council-seats beneath the open sky
On Sarnen's Mount,¹ there judge of fit
and right,

In simple democratic majesty:
Soft breezes fanning your rough brows—
the might

And purity of nature spread before your
sight!

From this appropriate Court, renowned
LUCERNE

Calls me to pace her honoured Bridge,¹
—that cheers

The Patriot's heart with pictures rude
and stern,

An uncouth Chronicle of glorious years,
Like portraiture, from loftier source,
endears

That work of kindred frame, which spans
the lake

Just at the point of issue, where it fears
The turn and motion of a stream to
take;

Where it begins to stir, yet voiceless as a
snake.

Volumes of sound, from the Cathedral
rolled.

This long-rooted Vista penetrate—but
see,

One after one, its tablets, that unfold
The whole design of Scripture history;

From the first tasting of the fatal Tree,
Till the bright Star appeared in eastern
skies, [free;
Announcing, ONE was born mankind to
His acts, his wrongs, his final sacrifice:
Lessons for every heart, a Bible for all
eyes.

Our pride misleads, our timid likings kill.
—Long may these homely Works devised
of old,

These simple efforts of Helvetic skill,
Aid, with congenial influence, to uphold
The State,—the Country's destiny to
should; [dust

Turning, for them who pass, the common
Of servile opportunity to gold;
Filling the soul with sentiments august—
The beautiful, the brave, the holy, and
the just!

No more: Time halts not in his noiseless
march—

Nor turns, nor winds, as doth the liquid
flood; [arch

Life slips from underneath us, like that
Of airy workmanship whereon we stood.
Earth stretched below, heaven in our
neighbourhood.

Go forth, my little Book! pursue thy
way;

Go forth, and please the gentle and the
good;

Nor be a whisper stifled, if it say
That treasures, yet untouched, may
grace some future Lay.

MEMORIALS OF A TOUR IN ITALY

1837

TO HENRY CRABB ROBINSON

COMPANION! by whose buoyant Spirit cheered,
In whose experience trusting, day by day
Treasures I gained with zeal that neither
feared

The toils nor felt the crosses of the way,
RYDAL MOUNT, Feb. 24, 1842.

These records take, and happy should I be
Were but the Gift a meet Return to thee
For kindnesses that never ceased to flow,
And prompt self-sacrifice to which I owe
Far more than any heart but mine can know.
W. WORDSWORTH.

THE TOUR of which the following Poems are very inadequate remembrances was shortened by report, too well founded, of the prevalence of Cholera at Naples. To make some amends for what was reluctantly left unseen in the South of Italy, we visited the Tuscan Sanctuaries among the Apennines, and the principal Italian Lakes among the Alps. Neither of those lakes, nor of Venice, is there any notice in these Poems, chiefly because I have touched upon them elsewhere. See, in particular, "Descriptive Sketches," "Memorials of a Tour on the Continent in 1820" and a Sonnet upon the extinction of the Venetian Republic.

I—

MUSINGS NEAR AQUAPENDENTE
APRIL, 1837

YE Apennines! with all your fertile
valleys [shores
Deeply embosomed, and your winding

¹ See Notes.

Of either sea, an Islander by birth,
A Mountaineer by habit, would resound
Your praise, in meet accordance with
your claims

Bestowed by Nature, or from man's
great deeds

Inherited:—presumptuous thought!—
it fled

Like vapour, like a towering cloud,
dissolved.

Not, therefore, shall my mind give way
to sadness;—

You snow-white torrent-fall, plumb
down it drops

Yet ever hangs of seems to hang in air.
Lulling the leisure of that high perched
town.

AQUAPENDENTE, in her lofty site
Its neighbour and its namesake—town,
and flood

Forth flashing out of its own gloomy
chasm

Bright sunbeams—the fresh verdure
of this lawn

Strewn with grey rocks, and on the
horizon's verge,

O'er intervenient waste, through glim-
mering haze,

Unquestionably kenned, that cone-
shaped hill

With fractured summit, no indifferent
sight

To travellers, from such comforts as
are thine,

Bleak Radicofani! escaped with joy—
These are before me: and the varied
scene

May well suffice, till noon-tide's sultry
heat

Relax, to fix and satisfy the mind
Passive yet pleased. What! with this

Broom in flower

Close at my side! She bids me fly to
greet

Her sisters, soon like her to be attired
With golden blossoms opening at the
feet

Of my own Fairfield. The glad greeting
given,

Given with a voice and by a look re-
turned

Of old companionship. Time counts
not minutes

Ere, from accustomed paths, familiar
fields,

The local Genius hurries me aloft,
Transported over that cloud-wooding
hill,

Seat Sandal, a fond suitor of the clouds.
With dream-like smoothness, to Helvel-
lyn's top,

There to alight upon crisp moss and
range,

Obtaining ampler boon, at every step,
Of visual sovereignty—hills multitu-
dinous,

(Not Apennine can boast of fairer) hills
Pride of two nations, wood and lake
and plains,

And prospect right below of deep coves
shaped

By skeleton arms, that, from the moun-
tain's trunk

Extended, clasp the winds, with mutual
moan

Struggling for liberty, while undismayed
The shepherd struggles with them.
Onward thence

And downward by the skirt of Green-
side fell.

And by Glenridding-screes, and low
Glencoign.

Places forsaken now, though loving
still

The muses, as they loved them in the
days

Of the old minstrels and the border
bards.—

But here am I fast bound; and let it
pass.

The simple rapture:—who that travels
far

To feed his mind with watchful eyes
could share

Or wish to share it?—One there surely
was,

“The Wizard of the North,” with
anxious hope

Brought to this genial climate, when
disease . . .

Preyed upon body and mind—yet not
the less

Had his sunk eye kindled at those
dear words

That spake of bards and minstrels;—
and his spirit

Had flown with mine to old Helvellyn's
brow.

Where once together, in his day of
strength,

We stood rejoicing, as if earth were free
From sorrow, like the sky above our
heads.

Years followed years, and when, upon
the eve

Of his last going from Tweed-side,
thought turned,

Or by another's sympathy was led,
To this bright land, Hope was for him
no friend,

Knowledge no help: Imagination shaped
No promise. Still, in more than ear-
deep seats,

Survives for me, and cannot but survive
“The tone of voice which wedded bor-
rowed words . . .

To sadness not their own, when, with
faint smile

Forced by intent to take from speech
its edge,

He said, “When I am there, although
’tis fair,

’Twill be another Yarrow.” Prophecy

More than fulfilled, as gay Campania's
 shores
 Soon witnessed, and the city of seven
 hills,
 Her sparkling fountains, and her mould-
 ering tombs:
 And more than all, that Eminence
 which showed
 Her splendours, seen, not felt, the
 while he stood
 A few short steps (painful they were)
 apart
 From Tasso's Convent-haven, and re-
 tired grave.

Peace to their Spirits! why should
 Poesy

Yield to the lure of vain regret, and
 hover
 In gloom on wings with confidence
 outspread
 To rove in sunshine?—Utter thanks,
 my Soul!

Tempered with awe, and sweetened
 by compassion

Nor them who in the shades of sorrow
 dwell,

That I—so near the term to human
 Appointed by man's common heritage,
 Frail as the frailest, one withal (if that
 Deserve a thought) but little known
 to fame—

Am free to rove where Nature's loveliest
 looks,

Art's noblest relics, history's rich be-
 quests,

Failed to reanimate and but feebly
 cheered

The whole world's Darling—free to
 rove at will

O'er high and low, and if requiring
 rest,

Rest from enjoyment only.

Thanks poured forth
 For what thus far hath blessed my
 wanderings, thanks

Fervent but humble as the lips can
 breathe

Where gladness seems a duty—let me
 guard

Those seeds of expectation which thy
 fruit

Already gathered in this favoured Land
 Enfolds within its core. The faith

be mine,
 That He who guides and governs all,
 approves

When gratitude, though disciplined
 to look

Beyond these transient spheres, doth
 wear a crown

Of earthly hope put on with trembling
 hand;

Nor is least pleased, we trust, when
 golden beams,

Reflected through the mists of age,
 from hours

Of innocent delight, remote or recent,
 Shoot but a little way—'tis all they

can—
 Into the doubtful future. Who would
 keep

Power must resolve to cleave to it
 through life.

Else it deserts him, surely as he lives.
 Saints would not grieve nor guardian

angels frown
 If one—while tossed, as was my lot to be,
 In a frail bark urged by two slender

oars
 Over waves rough and deep, that, when
 they broke,

Dashed their white foam against the
 palace walls

(Of Genoa the superb—should there
 be led

To meditate upon his own appointed
 tasks,

However humble in themselves, with
 thoughts

Raised and sustained by memory of
 His

Who oftentimes within those narrow
 bounds

Rocked on the surge, there tried his
 spirit's strength

And grasp of purpose, long ere sailed
 his ship

To lay a new world open.

Nor less prized
 Be those impressions which incline the
 heart

To mild, to lowly, and to seeming weak,
 Bend that way her desires. The dew.

the storm—
 The dew whose moisture fell in gentle

drops
 On the small hyssop destined to become,
 By Hebrew ordinance devoutly kept,

A purifying instrument—the storm
 That shook on Lebanon the cedar's

top,
 And as it shook, enabling the blind

roots
 Further to force their way, endowed

its trunk
 With magnitude and strength fit to

uphold
 The glorious temple—did alike proceed

From the same gracious will, were both
 an offspring

Of bounty infinite.

Between Powers that aim
 Higher to lift their lofty heads, impelled

By no profane ambition, Powers that
 thrive

By conflict, and their opposites, that trust

In lowliness—a mid-way tract there lies
Of thoughtful sentiment for every mind
Pregnant with good. Young, Middle-
aged, and Old,

From century on to century, must have known

The emotion—nav, more fitly were it said—

The blest tranquillity that sunk so deep
Into my spirit, when I paced, enclosed
In Pisa's Campo Santo, the smooth floor
Of its Arcades paved with sepulchral
slabs,

And through each window's open fret-
work looked

O'er the blank Area of sacred earth
Fetched from Mount Calvary, or haply
delved

In precincts nearer to the Saviour's
tomb,

By hands of men, humble as brave, who
fought

For its deliverance—a capacious field
That to descendants of the dead it holds

Breath: all living mute memento breathes.
These arching far than aught which
scene's walls

May well—~~to~~ their epitaphs can speak.
heat

Relax, to fix and satiate
Passive yet pleased. Weh, perilous as

Broom in flower
Close at my side! She rushed, Pieti,

greet
Her sisters, soon like he

With golden blossoms dyed by azure sky,
feet

Of my own Fairfield. And that which
given,

Given with a voice and by and with
turned

Of old companionship, Tible or fixed
not minutes

Ere, from accustomed patle Leaning-
fields,

The local Genius hurries on him
Transported over that

hill,
Seat Sandal, a fond suitor

With dream-like smooth: some sense of
lyn's top,

There to ally vanishes before the sight
ranger unextinguished, pomp un-

Obtain'd, he'd,
Of beauty unimpaired. Grand in

itself,
And for itself, the assemblage, grand

and fair
To view, and for the mind's consenting

eye
A type of age in man, upon its front

Bearing the world-acknowledged evil
dence

Of past exploits, nor fondly after more
Struggling against the stream of destiny.

But with its peaceful majesty content.
—Oh what a spectacle at every turn

The Place unfolds, from pavement
skinned with moss,

Or grass-grown spaces, where the heav-
es foot

Provokes no echoes, but must softly
tread:

Where Solitude with Silence paled
stops short

On Desolation, and to Ruin's scythe
Decay submits not.

But where'er my steps
Shall wander, chiefly let me cull with
care

Those images of genial beauty, oft
Too slowly to be pensive in themselves

But by reflexion made so, which do best
And fittest serve to crown with fragrant
wreath

Life's cup when almost filled with years,
like mine.

—How lovely robed in forenoon light
and shade!

Each ministering to each, didst thou
appear

Sayona, Queen of territory fair
As aught that marvellous coast thro'

all its length
Yields to the Stranger's eye. Remem-

brance holds
As a selected treasure thy one cliff,

That, while it wore for melancholy crest
A shattered Convent, yet rose proud

to have
Clinging to its steep sides a thousand

herbs
And shrubs, whose pleasant looks gave
proof how kind

The breath of air can be where earth
had else

Seemed churlish. And behold, both
far and near,

Garden and field all decked with orange
bloom,

And peach and citron, in Spring's
milkiest breeze

Expanding; and, along the smooth
shore curved

Into a natural port, a tideless sea,
So that mild breeze with motion and
with voice

Softly responsive; and, attuned to all
Those vernal charms of sight and
sound, appeared

Smooth space of turf which from the
guardian fort

Sloped seaward, turf whose tender
April green,

In coolest climes too fugitive, might
even here

Plead with the sovereign Sun for longer
stay

Than his unmitigated beams allow,
Nor plead in vain, if beauty could pre-
serve.

From mortal change, aught that is
born on earth

Or doth on time depend.

While on the brink
Of that high Convent-crested cliff I
stood,

Modest Savona ! over all did brood
A pure poetic Spirit—as the breeze.

Mild—as the verdure, fresh—the sun-
shine, bright—

Thy gentle Chiabrera !—not a stone,
Mural or level with the trodden floor.

In Church or Chapel, if my curious ques-
tioned

Missed not the truth, retains a single
name

Of young or old, warrior, or saint, or
sage,

To whose dear memories his sepulchral
verse

Paid simple tribute, such as might have
flowed

From the clear springs of a plain English
heart,

Say rather, one in native fellowship
With all who want not skill to couple
grief

With praise, as genuine admiration
prompts.

The grief, the praise, are severed from
their dust,

Yet in his page the records of that
worth

Survive, uninjured ;—glory then to
words,

Honour to word-preserving Arts, and
hail

Ye kindred local influences that still,
If Hope's familiar whispers merit faith,

Await my steps when they the breezy
height

Shall range of philosophic Tusculum ;
Or Sabine vales explored inspire a wish

To meet the shade of Horace by the
side

Of his Bandusian fount ; or I invoke
His presence to point out the spot
where once

He sat, and eulogized with earnest pen
Peace, leisure, freedom, moderate de-
sires ;

And all the immunities of rural life
Extolled, behind Vacuna's crumbling
fane.

Or let me loiter, soothed with what is
given

Nor asking more, on that delicious Bay,

Parthenope's Domain—Virgilian haunt,
Illustrated with never-dying verse,
And, by the Poet's laurel-shaded tomb,
Age after age to Pilgrims from all lands
Endeared.

And who—if not a man as cold
In heart as dull in brain—while pacing
ground

Chosen by Rome's legendary Bards
high minds

Out of her early struggles well inspired
To localize heroic acts—could look

Upon the spots with undelighted eye,
Though even to their last syllable the
Lays

And very names of those who gave
them birth

Have perished ?—Verily, to her utmost
depth,

Imagination feels what Reason fears
not

To recognize, the lasting virtue lodged
In those bold fictions that, by deeds
assigned

To the Valerian, Fabian, Curian Race,
And others like in fame, created Powers

With attributes from History derived,
By Poesy irradiate, and yet graced,

Through marvellous felicity of skill,
With something more propitious to
high aims

Than either, pent within her separate
sphere,

Can oft with justice claim.

And not disdaining
Union with those primeval energies

To virtue consecrate, stoop ye from
your height

Christian Traditions ! at my Spirit's
call

Descend, and, on the brow of ancient
Rome

As she survives in ruin, manifest
Your glories mingled with the brightest
 hues

Of her memorial halo, fading, fading,
But never to be extinct while Earth
endures.

O come, if undishonoured by the prayer,
From all her Sanctuaries !—Open for
my feet

Ye Catacombs, give to mine eyes a
glimpse

Of the Devout, as, mid your glooms
convened

For safety, they of yore enclasped the
Cross

On knees that ceased from trembling,
or intoned

Their orisons with voices half-suppressed,
But sometimes heard, or fancied to be
heard,

Even at this hour.

And thou Mamertine prison,
 Into that vault receive me from whose
 depth
 Issues, revealed in no presumptuous
 vision,
 Albeit lifting human to divine,
 A Saint, the Church's Rock, the mystic
 Keys
 Grasped in his hand; and lo' with
 upright sword
 Prefiguring his own impendent doom.
 The Apostle of the Gentiles: both
 prepared
 To suffer pains with heathen scorn and
 hate
 Inflicted:—blessed Men, for so to
 Heaven
 They follow their dear Lord!
 Time flows—nor wicks,
 Nor stagnates, nor precipitates his
 course,
 But many a benefit borne upon his
 breast
 For human-kind sinks out of sight, is
 gone,
 No one knows how, nor seldom is put
 forth
 An angry arm that snatches good away,
 Never perhaps to reappear. The Stream
 Has to our generation brought and
 brings
 Innumerable gains; yet we, who now
 Walk in the light of day, pertain full
 surely
 To a chilled age, most pitably shut out
 From that which is and actuates, by
 forms,
 Abstractions, and by lifeless fact to fact
 Minutely linked with diligence unin-
 spired,
 Unrectified, unguided, unsustained,
 By godlike insight. To this fate is
 doomed
 Science, wide-spread and spreading
 still as he
 Her conquests, in the world of sense
 made known.
 So with the internal mind it fares;
 and so
 With morals, trusting, in contempt or
 fear
 Of vital principle's controlling law,
 To her purblind guide Expediency;
 and so
 Suffers religious faith. Elate with
 view
 Of what is won, we overlook or scorn,
 The best that should keep pace with it,
 and must,
 To Else more and more the general mind
 will droop,
 A type as if bent on perishing. There
 lives

No faculty within us which the Soul
 Can spare, and humblest earthly Weal
 demands,
 For dignity not placed beyond her
 reach,
 Zealous co-operation of all means
 Given or acquired, to raise us from the
 mire,
 And liberate our hearts from low pur-
 suits.
 By gross Utilities enslaved we need
 More of ennobling impulse from the
 past.
 If to the future aught of good must come
 Sounder and therefore holier than the
 ends
 Which, in the giddiness of self-applause,
 We covet as supreme. O grant the
 crown
 That Wisdom wears, or take his treach-
 erous staff
 From Knowledge!—If the Muse, whom
 I have served
 This day, be mistress of a single pearl
 fit to be placed in that pure diadem;
 Then, not in vain, under these chestnut
 boughs
 Reclined, shall I have yielded up my
 soul
 To transports from the secondary
 founts
 Flowing of time and place, and paid to
 both
 Due homage; nor shall fruitlessly have
 striven.
 By love of beauty moved, to enshrine
 in verse
 Accordant meditations, which in times
 Vexed and disordered, as our own, may
 shed
 Influence, at least among a scattered
 few,
 To soberness of mind and peace of heart
 Friendly; as here to my repose hath
 been
 This flowering broom's dear neighbour-
 hood, the light
 And murmur issuing from yon pendent
 flood,
 And all the varied landscape. Let us
 now
 Rise, and to-morrow greet magnificent
 Rome.¹

II

THE PINE OF MONTE MARIO AT ROME

I saw far off the dark top of a Pine
 Look like a cloud—a slender stem the
 tie
 That bound it to its native earth—
 poised high

¹ See Note.

Mid evening hues, along the horizon
 line,
 Striving in peace each other to outshine.
 But when I learned the Tree was living
 there,
 Saved from the sordid axe by Beau-
 mont's care,
 Oh, what a gush of tenderness was
 mine!
 The rescued Pine-tree, with its sky
 so bright,
 And cloud-like beauty, rich in thoughts
 of home,
 Death-parted friends, and days too
 swift in flight,
 Supplanted the whole majesty of Rome
 (Then first apparent from the Pincian
 Height)
 Crowned with St. Peter's everlasting
 Dome.¹

III

AT ROME

Is this, ye Gods, the Capitoline Hill?
 Yon petty Steep in truth the fearful
 Rock,
 Tarpeian named of yore, and keeping
 still
 That name, a local Phantom proud to
 mock
 The Traveller's expectation?—Could
 our Will
 Destroy the ideal Power within, 'twere
 done
 Thro' what men see and touch, slaves
 wandering on,
 Impelled by thirst of all but Heaven-
 taught skill.
 Full oft, our wish obtained, deeply we
 sigh:
 Yet not unrecompensed are they who
 learn,
 From that depression raised, to mount
 on high
 With stronger wing, more clearly to
 discern
 Eternal things: and, if need be, defy
 Change, with a brow not insolent,
 though stern.

IV

AT ROME.—REGRETS.—IN ALLUSION TO
 NIEBUHR AND OTHER MODERN HIS-
 TORIANS

Those old credulities, to nature dear,
 Shall they no longer bloom upon the
 stock
 Of History, stript naked as a rock
 'Mid a dry desert? What is it we hear?
 The glory of Infant Rome must dis-
 appear.

¹ See Note.

Her morning splendors vanish, and
 their place
 Know them no more. If Truth, who
 veiled her face
 With those bright beams yet hid it not,
 must steer
 Henceforth a humbler course perplexed
 and slow;
 One solace yet remains for us who came
 Into this world in days when story
 lacked
 Severe research, that in our hearts we
 know
 How, for exciting youth's heroic flame,
 Assent is power, belief the soul of fact.

V

CONTINUED

COMPLACENT Fictions were they, yet the
 same
 Involved a history of no doubtful sense,
 History that proves by inward evidence
 From what a precious source of truth it
 came.
 Ne'er could the boldest Eulogist have
 dared
 Such deeds to paint, such characters to
 frame.
 But for correal sympathy prepared
 To greet with instant faith their loftiest
 claim.
 None but a noble people could have
 loved
 Flattery in Ancient Rome's pur-
 minded style:
 Not in like sort the Runic Scald was
 moved;
 He, nursed 'mid savage passions that
 defile
 Humanity, sang feats that well might
 call
 For the blood-thirsty mead of Odin's
 riotous Hall.

VI

PLEA FOR THE HISTORIAN

FORBEAR to deem the Chronicler un-
 wise,
 Ungentle, or untouched by seemly ruth.
 Who, gathering up all that Time's
 envious tooth
 Has spared of sound and grave realities,
 Firmly rejects those dazzling flatteries,
 Dear as they are to unsuspecting Youth,
 That might have drawn down Clio from
 the skies
 To vindicate the majesty of truth.
 Such was her office while she walked
 with men,
 A Muse, who, not unmindful of her Sire
 All-ruling Jove, whate'er the theme
 might be

Revered her Mother, sage Mnemosyne,
And taught her faithful servants how the
lyre
Should animate, but not mislead, the
pen.¹

VII

AT ROME

THEY—who have seen the noble
Roman's scorn
Break forth at thought of laying down
his head,
When the blank day is over, garreted
In his ancestral palace, where, from
morn
To night, the desecrated floors are worn
By feet of purse-proud strangers; they
—who have read
In one meek smile, beneath a peasant's
shed,
How patiently the weight of wrong is
borne;
They—who have heard some learned
Patriot treat
Of freedom, with mind grasping the
whole theme
From ancient Rome, downwards through
that bright dream
Of Commonwealth, each city a starlike
seat
Of rival glory: they—fallen Italy—
Nor must, nor will, nor can, despair of
Thee!

VIII

NEAR ROME, IN SIGHT OF ST. PETER'S
Long has the dew been dried on tree and
lawn;
O'er man and beast a not unwelcome
noon
Is shed, the languor of approaching
noon;
To shady rest withdrawing or with-
drawn
Mute are all creatures, as this couchant
fawn,
Save insect-swarms that hum in air
afloat,
Save that the Cock is crowing, a shrill
note,
Startling and shrill as that which roused
the dawn.
—Heard in that hour, or when, as now,
the nerve
Shrinks from the note as from a mis-
timed thing,
Oft for a holy warning may it serve,
Charged with remembrance of his sudden
sting,
His bitter tears, whose name the Papal
Chair [to bear,
And yon resplendent Church are proud

¹ Quem virum—lyra—
—sunes celebrare cho?

IX

AT ALBANO

DAYS passed—and Monte Calvo would
not clear
His head from mist; and, as the wind
sobbed through
Albano's dripping Ilex avenue,
My dull forebodings in a Peasant's ear
Found casual vent. She said, "Be of
good cheer;
Our yesterday's procession did not sue
In vain; the sky will change to sunny
blue,
Thanks to our Lady's grace." I smiled
to hear,
But not in scorn:—the Matron's Faith
may lack
The heavenly sanction needed to ensure
Fulfillment; but, we trust, her upward
track
Stops not at this low point, nor wants the
lure
Of flowers, the Virgin without fear may
own,
For by her Son's blest hand the seed was
sown.

X

NEAR ANIO's stream, I spied a gentle
Fove
Perched on an olive branch, and heard
her cooing
Mid new-born blossoms that soft airs
were wooing,
While all things present told of joy and
love.
But restless Fancy left that olive grove
To hail the exploratory Bird renewing
Hope for the few, who, at the world's
undoing,
On the great flood were spared to live
and move.
O bounteous Heaven! signs true as dove
and bough
Brought to the ark are coming evermore,
Given though we seek them not, but
while we plough
This sea of life without a visible shore,
Do neither promise ask nor grace in
plore
In what alone is ours, the living Now.

XI

FROM THE ALBAN HILLS, LOOKING TO-
WARDS ROME

FORGIVE, illustrious Country! these deep
sighs,
Heaved less for thy bright plains and
hills bestrown
With monuments decayed or over-
thrown,
For all that tottering stands or pro-
strate lies,

Than for like scenes in moral vision
 shown,
 Ruin perceived for keener sympathies ;
 Faith crushed, yet proud of weeds, her
 gaudy crown ;
 Virtues laid low, and mouldering
 energies.
 Yet why prolong this mournful strain ?—
 Fallen Power,
 Thy fortunes, twice exalted, might
 provoke
 Verse to glad notes prophetic of the hour
 When thou, uprisen, shalt break thy
 double yoke,
 And enter, with prompt aid from the
 Most High,
 On the third stage of thy great destiny.

XII

NEAR THE LAKE OF THRASYMENE

Why here with Carthage Rome to
 conflict came,
 An earthquake, mingling with the
 battle's shock,
 Checked not its rage, unfelt the ground
 did rock,
 Sword dropped not, javelin kept its
 deadly aim.—
 Now all is sun-bright peace. Of that
 day's shame.
 Or glory, not a vestige seems to endure.
 Save in this Rill that took from blood
 the name !
 Which yet it bears, sweet Stream ! as
 crystal pure.
 So may all trace and sign of deeds aloof
 From the true guidance of humanity.
 Thro' Time and Nature's influence,
 purify
 Their spirit ; or, unless they for reproof
 Or warning serve, thus let them all, on
 ground
 That gave them being, vanish to a sound.

XIII

NEAR THE SAME LAKE

For action born, existing to be tried,
 Flowers manifold we have that intervene
 To stir the heart that would too closely
 screen
 Her peace from images to pain allied.
 What wonder if at midnight, by the
 side
 Of Sanguinetta or broad Thrasymane,
 The clasp of arms is heard, and phan-
 toms glide,
 Unhappy ghosts in troops by moonlight
 seen ;
 And singly thine, O vanquished Chief !
 whose corse,
 Unburied, lay hid under heaps of slain.
 Sanguinetta,

W.P.

But who is He ?—the Conqueror.
 Would he force
 His way to Rome ? Ah, no,—round hill
 and plain
 Wandering, he haunts, at fancy's strong
 command.
 This spot—his shadowy death-cup in
 his hand.

XIV

THE CUCKOO AT LAVERNA

MAY 25, 1837

List—'twas the Cuckoo.—O with what
 delight
 Heard I that voice ! and catch it now,
 though faint,
 Far off and faint, and melting into air,
 Yet not to be mistaken. Hark again !
 Those louder cries give notice that the
 Bird,
 Although invisible as Echo's self,
 Is wheeling hitherward. Thanks, happy
 Creature,
 For this unthought-of greeting !
 While allured
 From vale to hill, from hill to vale led on,
 We have pursued, through various lands,
 a long
 And pleasant course : flower after flower
 has blown,
 Embellishing the ground that gave them
 birth
 With aspects novel to my sight : but
 still
 Most fair, most welcome, when they
 drank the dew
 In a sweet fellowship with kinds beloved.
 For old remembrance sake. And oft—
 where Spring
 Display'd her richest blossoms among
 files
 Of orange-trees bedecked with glowing
 fruit
 Ripe for the hand, or under a thick
 shade
 Of ilex, or, if better suited to the hour,
 The lightsome Olive's twinkling can-
 ope—
 Oft have I heard the Nightingale and
 Thrush
 Blending as in a common English grove
 Their love-songs : but, where'er my feet
 might roam,
 Whate'er assemblages of new and old,
 Strange and familiar, might beguile the
 way,
 A gratulation from that vagrant Voice
 Was wanting ;—and most happily till
 now.
 For see, Laverna ! mark the far-famed
 Pile,
 High on the brink of that precipitous
 rock.

Implanted like a Fortress, as in truth
It is, a Christian Fortress, garrisoned
In faith and hope, and dutiful obedience,
By a few Monks, a stern society,
Dead to the world and scorning earth-born joys.

Nay—though the hopes that drew, the
fears that drove,
St. Francis, far from Man's resort, to
abide

Among these sterile heights of Apennine,
Bound him, nor, since he raised yon
House, have ceased

To bind his spiritual Progeny, with rules
Stringent as flesh can tolerate and live:
His milder Genius (thanks to the good
God

That made us) over those severe re-
straints

Of mind, that dread heart-freezing
discipline.

Doth sometimes here predominate, and
works

By unsought means for gracious pur-
poses;

For earth through heaven, for heaven,
by changeful earth.

Illustrated, and mutually endeared.

Rapt though He were above the power
of sense,

Familiarly, yet out of the cleansed
heart

Of that once sinful Being overflowed
On sun, moon, stars, the nether elements,

And every shape of creature they
sustain,

Divine affections; and with beast and
bird

(Stilled from afar—such marvel story
tells—

By casual outbreak of his passionate
words,

And from their own pursuits in field or
grove

Drawn to his side by look or act of love
Humane, and virtue of his innocent
life)

He went to hold companionship so free,
So pure, so fraught with knowledge and
delight,

As to be likened in his Followers' minds
To that which our first Parents, ere the
fall

From their high state darkened the
Earth with fear,

Held with all Kinds in Eden's blissful
bowers.

Then question not that, 'mid the
austere Band,

Who breathe the air he breathed, tread
where he trod,

Some true Partakers of his loving spirit

Do still survive, and, with those gentle
hearts

Consorted, Others, in the power, the
faith,

Of a baptized imagination, prompt
To catch from Nature's humblest

monitors

Whate'er they bring of impulses sublime.

Thus sensitive must be the Monk,
though pale

With fasts, with vigils worn, depressed
by years,

Whom in a sunny glade I chanced to see,
Upon a pine-tree's storm-uprooted

trunk,
Seated alone, with forehead sky-ward

raised,
Hands clasped above the crucifix he

swore
Appended to his bosom, and lips closed
By the joint pressure of his musing

mood
And habit of his vow. That ancient

Man—
Nor sharply less the Brother whom I

marked,
As we approached the Convent gate,

aloft
Looking far forth from his aerial cell,

A young Ascetic—Poet, Hero, Sage,
He might have been, Lover belike he

was—
If they received into a conscious ear

The notes whose first faint greeting
startled me,

Whose sedulous iteration thrilled with
joy

My heart—may have been moved like
me to think,

Ah! not like me who walk in their
world's ways,

On the great Prophet, styled *the Voice*
of One

Crying amid the wilderness, and given,
Now that their snows must melt, their

herbs and flowers
Revive, their obstinate winter pass away,

That awful name to Thee, thee, simple
Cuckoo,

Wandering in solitude, and evermore
Foretelling and proclaiming, ere thou

leave
This thy last haunt beneath Italian skies

To carry thy glad tidings over heights
Still loftier, and to climes more near the

Pole.

Voice of the Desert. fare-thee-well;
sweet Bird!

If that substantial title please thee more,
Farewell!—but go thy way, no need

hast thou [bow
Of a good wish sent after thee: from

To bower as green, from sky to sky as clear,
 Thee gentle breezes waft—or airs that meet
 Thy course and sport around thee softly
 Till Night, descending upon hill and vale,
 Grants to thy mission a brief term of silence,
 And folds thy pinions up in blest repose.

XV

AT THE CONVENT OF CAMALDOI

GRIEVE for the Man who hither came bereft,
 And seeking consolation from above,
 Nor grieve the less that skill to him was left

To paint this picture of his lady-love :
 Can she, a blessed saint, thy work approve ?

And O, good Brethren of the cowl, a
 So far, to which with peril he must cling,
 Destroy in pity, or with care remove.
 That bloom—those eyes—can they

assist to bind
 Thoughts that would stray from Heaven ? The dream must cease

To be ; by Faith, not sigh, his soul must live ;
 Else will the enamoured Monk too surely
 How wide a space can part from inward peace

The most profound repose his cell can

XVI

CONTINUED

THE world forsaken, all its busy cares
 And stirring interests shunned with desperate flight,

All trust abandoned in the healing might
 Of virtuous action ; all that courage dares,

Labour accomplishes, or patience bears—
 Those helps rejected, they, whose minds perceive

How subtly works man's weakness, sighs may heave

For such a One beset with cloistral Father of Mercy ! rectify his view,

If with his vows this object ill agree ;
 Shed over it thy grace, and thus subdue

Imperious passion in a heart set free :—
 That earthly love may to herself be true,
 Give him a soul that cleaveth unto thee.

XVII

AT THE EREMITIC OR UPPER CONVENT OF CAMALDOI

WHAT aim had they, the Pair of Monks,
 Enormous, dragged, while side by side

they sat,

† See Note.

By panting steers up to this convent gate ?

How, with empurpled cheeks and pampered eyes,

Dare they confront the lean austerities
 Of Brethren who, here fixed, on Jesu wait

In sackcloth, and God's anger deprecate
 Through all that humbles flesh and mortifies ?

Strange contrast !—verily the world of dreams,

Where mingle, as for mockery combined,
 Things in their very essences at strife,
 Shows not a sight incongruous as the extremes

That everywhere, before the thoughtful mind,

Meet on the solid ground of waking life.

XVIII

AT VALLOMBROSA

Thick as autumnal leaves that strew the brooks
 In Vallombrosa, where Etrurian shades,
 High over-arch'd embower.

PARADISE LOST.

“ VALLOMBROSA—I longed in thy shadiest wood

To slumber, reclined on the moss-covered floor ! ”

Fond wish that was granted at last, and the Flood,

That lulled me asleep bids me listen once more.

Its murmur how soft ! as it falls down the steep.

Near that Cell—yon sequestered Retreat high in air—

Where our Milton was wont lonely vigils to keep

For converse with God, sought through study and prayer.

The Monks still repeat the tradition with pride,

And its truth who shall doubt ? for his Spirit is here :

In the cloud-piercing rocks doth her grandeur abide,

In the pines pointing heavenward her beauty austere ;

In the flower-besprent meadows his genius we trace

Turned to humbler delights, in which youth might confide,

That would yield him fit help while prefiguring that Place

Where, if sin had not entered, Love never had died.

‡ See Note.

§ See for the two first lines, “ Stanzas composed in the Simplicon Pass.”

When with life lengthened out came a
desolate time,
And darkness and danger had compassed
him round,
With a thought he would flee to these
haunts of his prime,
And here once again a kind shelter be
found.
And let me believe that when nightly
the Muse
Did waft him to Sion, the glorified hill,
Here also, on some favoured height, he
would choose
To wander, and drink inspiration at will.
Vallombrosa ! of thee I first heard in the
page
Of that holiest of Bards, and the name
for my mind
Had a musical charm, which the winter
of age
And the changes it brings had no power
to unbind.
And now, ye Miltonian shades ! under
you
I repose, nor am forced from sweet fancy
to part,
While your leaves I behold and the
brooks they will strew,
And the realised vision is clasped to my
heart.
Even so, and unblamed, we rejoice as we
may
In Forms that must perish, frail objects
of sense ;
Unblamed - if the Soul be intent on the
day
When the Being of Beings shall summon
her hence.
For he and he only with wisdom is blest
Who, gathering true pleasures wherever
they grow,
Looks up in all places, for joy or for rest,
To the Fountain whence Time and
Eternity flow.

XIX

AT FLORENCE

UNDER the shadow of a stately Pile,
The dome of Florence, pensive and alone,
Nor giving heed to aught that passed
the while,
I stood, and gazed upon a marble stone,
The laurelled Dante's favourite seat.
A throne,
In just esteem, it rivals ; though no style,
Be there of decoration to beguile
The mind, depressed by thought of
greatness frown.
As a true man, who long had served the
lyre,
I gazed with earnestness, and dared no
more.
But in his breast the mighty Poet bore

A Patriot's heart, warm with undying
fire.
Bold with the thought, in reverence I
sate down,
And, for a moment, filled that empty
Throne.

XX

BEFORE THE PICTURE OF THE BAPTIST,
BY RAPHAEL, IN THE GALLERY AT
FLORENCE

The Baptist might have been ordain'd
to cry
Forth from the towers of that huge Pile,
wherein
His Father served Jehovah ; but how
Due audience, how for aught but scorn
defy
The obstinate pride and wanton revelry
Of the Jerusalem below, her sin
And folly, if they with united din
Drown not at once mandate and pro-
phesy ?
Therefore the Voice spake from the
Desert, thence
To Her, as to her opposite in peace,
Silence, and holiness, and innocence,
To Her and to all Lands its warning sent,
Crying, with earnestness that might not
cease,
" Make straight a highway for the Lord
—repent !"

XXI

AT FLORENCE.—FROM MICHAEL ANGELO
RAPT above earth by power of one fair
face,

Hers in whose sway alone my heart
delights,
I mingle with the blest on those pure
heights
When Man, yet mortal, rarely finds a
[placet
With Him who made the Work that.
Work accords
[grace
So well, that by its help and through his
I raise my thoughts, inform my deeds
and words,
Clasping her beauty in my soul's embrace.
Thus, if from two fair eyes mine cannot
turn,
I feel how in their presence doth abide
Light which to God is both the way and
guide :
And, kindling at their lustre, if I burn.
My noble fire emits the joyful ray
That through the realms of glory shines
for aye.

XXII

AT FLORENCE.—FROM M. ANGELO
ETERNAL Lord ! eased of a cumbrous
load,
And loosened from the world, I turn to
Thee ;

Shun, like a shattered bark, the storm,
and flee

To thy protection for a safe abode.

The crown of thorns, hands pierced upon
the tree,

The meek, benign, and lacerated face,
To a sincere repentance promise grace,
To the sad soul give hope of pardon free.
With justice mark not Thou, O Light
divine,

My fault, nor hear it with thy sacred ear;
Neither put forth that way thy arm
severe;

Wash with thy blood my sins; thereto
incline

More readily the more my years require
Help, and forgiveness speedy and entire.

XXIII

AMONG THE RUINS OF A CONVENT IN THE
APENNINES

Ye Trees! whose slender roots entwine
Altars that piety neglects:

Whose infant arms enclasp the shrine

Which no devotion now respects;

If not a straggler from the herd
Here ruminates, not shrouded bird,
Chanting her low-voiced hymn, take
pride

In aught that ye would grace or hide—
How sadly is your love misplaced,

Fair Trees, your bounty run to waste!

Ye, too, wild Flowers! that no one
heeds,

And ye—full often spurned as weeds—
In beauty clothed, or breathing sweet-
ness

From fractured arch and mouldering
wall—

Do but more touchingly recall
Man's headstrong violence and Time's
fleetness,

Making the precincts ye adorn
Appear to sight still more forlorn.

XXIV

IN LOMBARDY

SEE, where his difficult way that Old
Man wins

Bent by a load of Mulberry leaves!—
most hard

Appears his lot, to the small Worm,
compared,

For whom his toil with early day begins.
Acknowledging no task-master, at will
(As if her labour and her ease were
twins)

She seems to work, at pleasure to lie
still:—

And softly sleeps within the thread she
spins,

So fare they—the Man serving as her
Slave.

Ere long their fates do each to each
conform:

Both pass into new being,—but the
Worm,

Transfigured, sinks into a hopeless
grave;

His volant Spirit will, he trusts, ascend
To bliss unbounded, glory without end.

XXV

AFTER LEAVING ITALY

FAIR Land! Thee all men greet with
joy; how few,

Whose souls take pride in freedom,
virtue, fame,

Part from thee without pity dyed in
shame:

I could not—while from Venice we with-
drew,

Led on till an Alpine strait confined our
view

Within its depths, and to the shore we
came

Of Lago Morto, dreary sight and name,
Which o'er sad thoughts a sadder
colouring threw.

Italia! on the surface of thy spirit,
(Too aptly emblem'd by that torpid
lake)

Shall a few partial breezes only creep?—
Be its depths quickened; what thou dost
inherit

Of the world's hopes, dare to fulfil;
awake,

Mother of Heroes, from thy death-like
sleep!

XXVI

CONTINUED

As indignation mastered grief, my tongue
Spoke bitter words; words that did ill
agree

With these rich stores of Nature's imagery,
And divine Art, that fast to memory
clung—

Thy gifts, magnificent Region, ever
In the sun's eye, and in his sister's sight

How beautiful! how worthy to be sung
In strains of rapture, or subdued de-
light!

I feign not; witness that unwelcome
That followed the first sound of German
speech,

Caught the far-winding barrier Alps
among.

In that announcement, greeting seemed
to mock

Parting; the casual word had power
to reach

My heart, and filled that heart with
conflict strong.

XXVII

COMPOSED AT RYDAL ON MAY MORNING,
1838

Is with old love of you, dear Hills!
I share
New love of many a rival image brought
From far, forgive the wanderings of my
thought:
Not art thou wronged, sweet May,
when I compare
Thy present birth-morn with thy last, so
fair,
So rich to me in favours. For my lot
Then was, within the famed Egerian
Grot
To sit and muse, fanned by its dewy
air
Mingling with thy soft breath! That
morning too,
Warblers I heard their joy unbosoming
Amid the sunny, shadowy, Colyseum;
Heard them, unchecked by aught of
saddening hue,
For victories there won by flower-
crowned Spring
Chant in full choir their innocent Te-
Deum.

XXVIII

THE PILLAR OF TRAJAN

WHERE towers are crushed, and unfor-
bidden weeds
O'er mutilated arches shed their seeds;
And temples, doomed to milder change,
unfold
A new magnificence that vies with old:
Firm in its pristine majesty hath stood
A votive Column, spared by fire and
flood:—
And, though the passions of man's
fretful race
Have never ceased to eddy round its
base,
Not injured more by touch of meddling
hands
Than a lone obelisk, 'mid Nubian sands,
Or aught in Syrian deserts left to save
From death the memory of the good and
brave.
Historic figures round the shaft embost
Ascend, with lineaments in air not lost:
Still as he turns, the charmed spectator,
Group winding after group with dream-
like ease;
Triumphs in sunbright gratitude dis-
played,
Or softly stealing into modest shade.
—So, pleased with purple clusters to
entwine
Some lofty elm-tree, mounts the daring

The woodbine so, with spiral grace, and
breathes
Wide-spreading odours from her flowery
wreaths.

Borne by the Muse from rills in sheep-
herds' ears
Murmuring but one smooth story for all
years,
I gladly commune with the mind and
heart
Of him who thus survives by classic art,
His actions witness, venerate his mien,
And study Trajan as by Pliny seen;
Behold how fought the Chief whose con-
quering sword
Stretched far as earth might own a
single lord:
In the delight of moral prudence schooled,
How feelingly at home the Sovereign
ruled;
Pest of the good—in pagan faith allied
To more than Man, by virtue deified.

Memorial Pillar! 'mid the wrecks of
Time
Preserve thy charge with confidence sub-
lime—
The exultations, pumps, and cares of
Rome,
Whence half the breathing world re-
ceived its doom:
Things that recoil from language; that,
if shown
By apter pencil, from the light had
flown.
A Pontiff, Trajan here the Gods implores,
There greets an Embassy from Indian
shores:
Lo! he harangues his cohorts—there the
storm
Of battle meets him in authentic form!
Unharnessed, naked, troops of Moorish
horse
Sweep to the charge; more high, the
Dacian force,
To hoof and finger mailed;—yet, high or
low,
None bleed, and none lie prostrate but
the foe;
In every Roman, through all turns of
Fate,
Is Roman dignity inviolate;
Spirit in him pre-eminent, who guides,
Supports, adorns, and over all presides;
Distinguished only by inherent state
From honoured Instruments that round
him wait;
Rise as he may, his grandeur scorns the
test
Of outward symbol, nor will deign to
rest
On aught by which another is depressed.

—Alas ! that One thus disciplined could
 toil
 To enslave whole nations on their native
 soil;
 So emulous of Macedonian fame,
 That, when his age was measured with
 his aim,
 Hedrooped, 'mid else unclouded victories.
 And turned his eagles back with deep-
 drawn sighs :
 O weakness of the Great ! O folly of the
 Where now the haughty Empire that
 was spread

With such fond hope ? her very speech
 is dead ;
 Yet glorious Art the power of Time
 defies,
 And Trajan still, through various enter-
 prise,
 Mounts, in this fine illusion, towards the
 skies :
 Still are we present with the Imperial
 Chief,
 Nor cease to gaze upon the bold Relief
 Till Rome, to silent marble unconfined,
 Becomes with all her years a vision of the
 Mind.

THE EGYPTIAN MAID

OR,

THE ROMANCE OF THE WATER LILY

[For the names and persons in the following poem, see the "History of the renowned Prince Arthur and his Knights of the Round Table;" for the rest the Author is answerable; only it may be proper to add, that the Lotus, with the bust of the Goddess appearing to rise out of the full-blown flower, was suggested by the beautiful work of ancient art, once included among the Townley Marbles, and now in the British Museum.]

WHILE Merlin paced the Cornish
 sands,
 Forth-looking towards the rocks of
 Scilly,
 The pleased Enchanter was aware
 Of a bright Ship that seemed to hang
 in air,
 Yet was she work of mortal hands,
 And took from men her name—THE
 WATER LILY.

Soft was the wind, that landward blew ;
 And, as the Moon, o'er some dark hill
 ascendant,
 Grews from a little edge of light
 To a full orb, this Pinnacle bright
 Became, as nearer to the coast she
 drew,
 More glorious, with spread sail and
 streaming pendant.

Upon this winged Shape so fair
 Sage Merlin gazed with admiration :
 Her lineaments, thought he, surpass
 Aught that was ever shown in magic
 glass ;
 Was ever built with patient care ;
 Or, at a touch, produced by happiest
 transformation.

Now, though a Mechanist, whose skill
 Shames the degenerate grasp of modern
 science,
 Grave Merlin (and belike the more
 For practising occult and perilous lore)
 Was subject to a freakish will
 That sapped good thoughts, or scared
 them with defiance,

Provoked to envious spleen, he cast
 An altered look upon the advancing
 Stranger
 Whom he had hailed with joy, and
 cried,
 "My Art shall help to tame her pride—"
 Anon the breeze became a blast,
 And the waves rose, and sky portended
 danger.

With thrilling word, and potent sign
 Traced on the beach, his work the
 Sorcerer urges ;
 The clouds in blacker clouds are lost,
 Like spiteful Fiends that vanish,
 crossed
 By Fiends of aspect more malign,
 And the winds roused the Deep with
 fiercer scourges.

But worthy of the name she bore
 Was this Sea-flower, this buoyant
 Galley ;
 Supreme in loveliness and grace
 Of motion, whether in the embrace
 Of trusty anchorage, or scudding o'er.
 The main flood roughened into hill and
 valley.

Behold, how wantonly she laves
 Her sides, the Wizard's craft confound-
 ing ;
 Like something out of Ocean sprung
 To be for ever fresh and young,
 Breasts the sea-flashes, and huge
 waves
 Top-gallant high, rebounding and re-
 bounding !

But Ocean under magic heaves,
And cannot spare the Thing he cher-
ished :

Ah! what avails that she was fair,
Luminous, blithe, and debonaire?
The storm has stripped her of her
leaves :

The Lily floats no longer!—She hath
perished.

Grieve for her,—she deserves no less.
So like, yet so unlike, a living Crea-
ture!

No heart had she, no busy brain;
Though loved, she could not love
again;

Though pitied, *feel* her own distress;
Nor aught that troubles us, the fools of
Nature.

Yet is there cause for gushing tears;
So richly was this Galley laden,
A fairer than herself she bore,
And, in her struggles, cast ashore;
A lovely One, who nothing hears
Of wind or wave—a meek and guileless
Maiden.

Into a cave had Merlin fled
From mischief, caused by spells him-
self had muttered;

And while, repentant all too late,
In moody posture there he sate,
He heard a voice, and saw, with half-
raised head,

A Visitant by whom these words were
uttered;

"On Christian service this frail Bark
Sailed" (hear me, Merlin!) "under high
protection,

Though on her prow a sign of heathen
power [flower,
Was carved—a Goddess with a Lily
The old Egyptian's emblematic mark
Of joy immortal and of pure affection.

Her course was for the British strand;
Her freight, it was a Damsel peerless;
God reigns above, and Spirits strong
May gather to avenge this wrong
Done to the Princess, and her Land
Which she in duty left, sad but not
cheerless.

And to Caerleon's loftiest tower
Soon will the Knights of Arthur's
Table

A cry of lamentation send;
And all will weep who there attend,
To grace that Stranger's bridal hour,
For whom the sea was made unnavigable.

Shame! should a Child of royal line
Die through the blindness of thy
malice?"

Thus to the Necromancer spake
Nina, the Lady of the Lake,
A gentle Sorceress, and benign,
Who ne'er embittered any good man's
chalice.

"What boots," continued she, "to
mourn?

To expiate thy sin endeavour:
From the bleak isle where she is laid,
Fetched by our art, the Egyptian
Maid

May yet to Arthur's court be borne
Cold as she is, ere life be fled for ever.

My pearly Boat, a shining Light,
That brought me down that sunless
river,

Will bear me on from wave to wave,
And back with her to this sea-cave;—
Then Merlin! for a rapid flight
Through air, to thee my Charge will I
deliver.

The very swiftest of thy cars
Must, when my part's done, be ready;
Meanwhile, for further guidance, look
Into thy own prophetic book;
And, if that fail, consult the Stars
To learn thy course; farewell! be
prompt and steady."

This scarcely spoken, she again
Was seated in her gleaming shallop,
That, o'er the yet-distempered Deep,
Pursued its way with bird-like sweep,
Or like a steed, without a rein,
Urged o'er the wilderness in sportive
gallop.

Soon did the gentle Nina reach
That Isle without a house or haven;
Landing, she found not what she
sought,

Nor saw of wreck or ruin aught
But a carved Lotus cast upon the beach
By the fierce waves, a flower in marble
graven.

Sad relique, but how fair the while!
For gently each from each retreating
With backward curve, the leaves re-
vealed

The bosom half, and half concealed,
Of a Divinity, that seemed to smile
On Nina, as she passed, with hopeful
greeting.

No quest was hers of vague desire,
Of tortured hope and purpose shaken;
Following the margin of a bay,
She spied the lonely Cast-away,
Unmarred, unstripped of her attire,
But with closed eyes,—of breath and
bloom forsaken.

Then Nina, stooping down, embraced,
With tenderness and mild emotion,
The Damsel, in that trance embound ;
And, while she raised her from the
ground,
And in the pearly shallop placed,
Sleep fell upon the air, and stilled the
ocean.

The turmoil hushed, celestial springs
Of music opened, and there came a
blending
Of fragrance, undervived from earth,
With gleams that owed not to the sun
their birth,
And that soft rustling of invisible
wings
Which Angels make, on works of love
descending.

And Nina heard a sweeter voice
Than if the Goddess of the flower had
spoken :
"Thou hast achieved, fair Dame !
what none
else e'er in spirit could have done ;
Go, in thy enterprise rejoice !
Air, earth, sea, sky, and heaven, success
betoken."

So cheered, she left that Island bleak
A bare rock of the Scilly cluster ;
And, as they traversed the smooth
brine,
The self-illumin'd Brigantine
Shed, on the Slumberer's cold wan
cheek
and pallid brow, a melancholy lustre.

Fleet was their course, and when they
came
To the dim cavern, whence the river
Issued into the salt-sea flood,
Merlin, as fixed in thought he stood,
Was thus accosted by the Dame ;
"Behold to thee my Charge I now
deliver !

But where attends thy chariot—
where ?"—
Quoth Merlin, "Even as I was bidden,
So have I done ; as trusty as thy
barge
My vehicle shall prove—O precious
Charge !
If this be sleep, how soft ! if death,
how fair !
Much have my books disclosed, but the
end is hidden."

He spake ; and gliding into view
Forth from the grotto's dimmest
chamber
Came two mute Swans, whose plumes
of dusky white

Changed, as the pair approached the
light,
Drawing an ebon car, their hue
(Like clouds of sunset) into lucid amber.

Once more did gentle Nina lift
The Princess, passive to all changes :
The car received her :—then up-went
Into the ethereal element
The Birds with progress smooth and
swift
As thought, when through bright regions
memory ranges.

Sage Merlin, at the Slumberer's side,
Instructs the Swans their way to
measure ;
And soon Caerleon's towers appeared,
And notes of minstrelsy were heard
From rich pavilions spreading wide,
For some high day of long-expected
pleasure.

Awe-stricken stood both Knights and
Dames
Ere on firm ground the car alighted ;
Eftsoons astonishment was past,
For in that face they saw the last
Last lingering look of clay, that
tames
All pride ; by which all happiness is
blighted.

Said Merlin, "Mighty King, fair
Lords,
Away with feast and tilt and tourney !
Ye saw, throughout this royal House,
Ye heard, a rocking marvellous
Of turrets, and a clash of swords
Self-shaken, as I closed my airy journey.

Lo ! by a destiny well known
To mortals, joy is turned to sorrow ;
This is the wished-for-Bride, the Maid
Of Egypt, from a rock conveyed
Where she by shipwreck had been
thrown ;
Ill sight ! but grief may vanish ere the
morrow."

"Though vast thy power, thy words
are weak."
Exclaimed the King, "a mockery hate-
ful ;
Dutiful Child, her lot how hard !
Is this her piety's reward ?
Those watery locks, that bloodless
cheek !
O winds without remorse ! O shore
ungrateful !

Rich robes are fretted by the moth ;
Towers, temples, fall by stroke of
thunder ;
Will that, or deeper thoughts, abate

A Father's sorrow for her fate ?
He will repent him of his troth ;
His brain will burn, his stout heart
split asunder,

Alas ! and I have caused this woe ;
For, when my prowess from invading
Neighbours

Had freed his Realm, he plighted word
That he would turn to Christ our Lord,
And his dear Daughter on a Knight
bestow

Whom I should choose for love and
matchless labours.

Her birth was heathen ; but a fence
Of holy Angels round her hovered :

A Lady added to my court
So fair, of such divine report
And worship, seemed a recompense

For fifty kingdoms by my sword re-
covered.

Ask not for whom, O Champions true !
She was reserved by me her life's
betrayer :

She who was meant to be a bride
Is now a curse : then put aside
Vain thoughts, and speed ye, with
observance due

Of Christian rites, in Christian ground to
lay her."

"The tomb," said Merlin, "may not
close

Upon her yet, earth hide her beauty ;
Not froward to thy sovereign will
Esteem me, Liege ! if I, whose skill

Wafted her hither, interpose
To check this pious haste of erring duty.

My books command me to lay bare
The secret thou art bent on keeping :
Here must a high attest be given,

What Bridegroom was for her, or-
dained by Heaven :

And in my glass significant there are
Of things that may to gladness turn this
weeping.

For this, approaching, One by One,
Thy Knights must touch the cold hand
of the Virgin ;

So, for the favoured One, the Flower
may bloom

Once more : but, if unchangeable her
doom,

If life departed be for ever gone,
Some blest assurance, from this cloud
emerging,

May teach him to bewail his loss ;
Not with a grief that, like a vapour,
rises

And melts ; but grief devout that shall
endure.

And a perpetual growth secure
Of purposes which no false thought
shall cross,

A harvest of high hopes and noble enter-
prises."

"So be it," said the King ;—"anon,
Here, where the Princess lies, begin the
trial ;

Knights each in order as ye stand
Step forth."—To touch the pallid
hand

Sir Agravaine advanced ; no sign he
won

From Heaven or earth ;—Sir Kaye had
like denial.

Abashed, Sir Dinas turned away ;
Even, for Sir Percival was no dis-
closure ;

Though he, devoutest of all Cham-
pions, ere

He reached that ebony car, the Mer
Whereof diffused like snow the Damsel
lay,

Fulk thrice had crossed himself in meek
composure.

Imagine (that ye Saints ! who can ?)
How in still air the balance trembled—

The wishes, peradventure the despites
That overcame some not ungenerous
Knights ;

And all the thoughts that lengthened
out a span

Of time to Lords and Ladies thus assem-
bled.

What patient confidence was here !
And there how many bosoms panted !

While drawing towards the car Sir
Gawaine, mailed

For tournament, his beaver veiled,
And softly touched ; but, to his
princely cheer

And high expectancy, no sign was
granted.

Next, disencumbered of his harp,
Sir Tristram, dear to thousands as a
brother,

Came to the proof, nor grieved that
there ensued

No change ;—the fair Izonda he had
wooed

With love too true, a love with pangs
too sharp,

From hope too distant, not to dread
another.

Not so Sir Lancelot ;—from Heaven's
grace

A sign he craved, tired slave of vain
contrition ;

The royal Guinever looked passing
glad.

When his touch failed.—Next came,
 Sir Galahad;
 He paused, and stood entranced by
 that still face
 Whose features he had seen in noontide
 vision.

For late, as near a murmuring stream
 He rested 'mid an arbour green and
 shady.

Nina, the good Enchantress, shed
 A light around his mossy bed;
 And, at her call, a waking dream
 Prefigured to his sense the Egyptian
 Lady.

Now, while his bright-haired front he
 bowed,
 And stood, far-kenned by mantle
 furred with ermine,
 As o'er the insensate Body hung
 The enrapt, the beautiful, the young,
 Belief sank deep into the crowd
 That he the solemn issue would deter-
 mine.

Not deers it strange; the Youth had
 worn

That very mantle on a day of glory,
 The day when he achieved that
 matchless feat,

The marvel of the PERILOUS SEAT,
 Which whoso'er approached of
 strength was shorn,

Though King or Knight the most re-
 nowned in story.

He touched with hesitating hand—
 And lo! those Birds, far-famed through
 Love's dominions,

The Swans, in triumph clap their wings;
 And their necks play, involved in
 rings, [land;—

Like sinless snakes in Eden's happy
 "Mine is she," cried the knight;—again
 they clapped their pinions.

"Mine was she—mine she is, though
 dead.

And to her name my soul shall cleave
 in sorrow;"

Whereat, a tender twilight streak
 Of colour dawned upon the Damsel's
 cheek;

And her lips, quickening with uncer-
 tain red,

Seemed from each other a faint warmth
 to borrow.

Deep was the awe, the rapture high,
 Of love emboldened, hope with dread
 entwining.

When, to the mouth, relenting Death
 Allowed a soft and flower-like breath,
 Precursor to a timid sigh,

To lifted eyelids, and a doubtful shining.

In silence did King Arthur gaze
 Upon the signs that pass away or
 tarry;

In silence watched the gentle strife
 Of Nature leading back to life;

Then eased his soul at length by praise
 Of God, and Heaven's pure Queen—the
 blissful Mary.

Then said he, "Take her to thy heart,
 Sir Galahad! a treasure, that God
 giveth,

Bound by indissoluble ties to thee
 Through mortal change and im-
 mortality;

Be happy and unenvied, thou who art
 A goodly Knight that hath no peer that
 liveth!"

Not long the Nuptials were delayed;
 And sage tradition still rehearses

The pomp, the glory of that hour
 When towards the altar from her
 bower

King Arthur led the Egyptian Maid,
 And Angels carolled these far-echoed
 verses;—

Who shrinks not from alliance
 Of evil with good Powers,
 To God proclaims defiance,
 And inocks whom he adores.

A Ship to Christ devoted
 From the Land of Nile did go;
 Alas! the bright Ship floated,
 An Idol at her prow.

By magic domination,
 The Heaven-permitted vent
 Of purblind mortal passion,
 Was wrought her punishment.

The Flower, the Form within it,
 What served they in her need?
 Her port she could not win it,
 Nor from mishap be freed.

The tempest overcame her,
 And she was seen no more;
 But gently, gently blame her—
 She cast a Pearl ashore.

The Maid to Jesu hearkened,
 And kept to him her faith,
 Till sense in death was darkened,
 Of sleep akin to death.

But Angels round her pillow
 Kept watch, a viewless band;
 And, billow favouring billow,
 She reached the destined strand.

Blast Pair! whate'er befall you,
 Your faith in Him approve
 Who from frail earth can call you
 To bowers of endless love!

THE RIVER DUDDON

A SERIES OF SONNETS

THE RIVER DUDDON rises upon Wrynose Fell, on the confines of Westmoreland, Cumberland, and Lancashire; and, having served as a boundary to the two last counties for the space of about twenty-five miles, enters the Irish Sea, between the Isle of Walney and the Lordship of Millup.

TO THE REV. DR. WORDSWORTH

(WITH THE SONNETS TO THE RIVER DUDDON, AND OTHER POEMS IN THIS COLLECTION, 1832)

THE Minstrels played their Christmas tune
To-night beneath my cottage-eaves;—
While, smitten by a lofty moon,
The encircling laurels, thick with leaves,
Gave back a rich and dazzling sheen,
That overpowered their natural green.

Through hill and valley every breeze
Had sunk to rest with folded wings;
Keen was the air, but could not freeze,
Nor check, the music of the strings;
So stout and hardy were the band
That scraped the chords with strenuous hand!

And who but listened?—till was paid
Respect to every inmate's claim:
The greeting given, the music played,
In honour of each household name,
Duly pronounced with lusty call,
And, "merry Christmas" wished to all!

O Brother! I revere the choice
That took thee from thy native hills;
And it is given thee to rejoice:
Though public care full often tills
(Heaven only witness of the toil)
A barren and ungrateful soil.

Yet, would that Thou, with me and mine,
Hast heard this never-failing rite;
And seen on other faces shine
A true revival of the light
Which Nature and these rustic powers,
In simple childhood, spread through ours!

For pleasure hath not ceased to wait
On these expected annual rounds;
Whether the rich man's sumptuous gate
Call forth the unelaborate sounds,
Or they are offered at the door
That guards the lowliest of the poor.

How touching, when, at midnight, sweep
Snow-muffled winds, and all is dark,
To hear—and sink again to sleep!

Or, at an earlier call, to mark,
By blazing fire, the still suspense
Of self-complacent innocence;

The mutual nod,—the grave disguise
Of hearts with gladness brimming o'er;
And some unbidden tears that rise
For names once heard, and heard no more;
Tears brightened by the serenade
For infant in the cradle laid.

Ah! not for emerald fields alone,
With ambient streams more pure and bright
Than fabled Cytherea's zone
Glistening before the Thunderer's sight,
Is to my heart of hearts endeared
The ground where we were born and reared!

Hail, ancient Manners! sure defence,
Where they survive, of wholesome laws;
Remnants of love whose modest sense
Thus into narrow room withdraws;
Hail, Usages of pristine mould,
And ye that guard them, Mountains old!

Bear with me, Brother! quench the thought
That slights this passion, or condemns;
If thee fond Fancy ever brought
From the proud margin of the Thames,
And Lambeth's venerable towers,
To humbler streams, and greener bowers.

Yes, they can make, who fail to find,
Short leisure even in busiest days;
Moments, to cast a look behind,
And profit by those kindly rays
That through the clouds do sometimes steal,
And all the far-off past reveal.

Hence, while the Imperial City's din
Beats frequent on thy satiate ear,
A pleased attention I may win
To agitations less severe,
That neither overwhelm nor cloy
But fill the hollow vale with joy!

I

Nor envying Latian shades—if yet they
throw [Spring
A grateful coolness round that crystal
Blandusia, prattling as when long ago
The Sabine Bard was moved her praise
to sing:

Careless of flowers that in perennial blow
Round the moist marge of Persian foun-
tains cling;

Heedless of Alpine torrents thundering

Through ice-built arches radiant as
heaven's bow;

I seek the birth-place of a native
Stream.—

All hail, ye mountains! hail, thou morn-
ing light! [height

Better to breathe at large on this clear
Than toil in needless sleep from dream to
dream:

Pure flow the verse, pure, vigorous, free,
and bright. [theme!

For Duddon, long-loved Duddon, is my

II

CHILD of the clouds ! remote from every
taint
Of sordid industry thy lot is cast ;
Thine are the honours of the lofty
waste ;
Not seldom, when with heat the valleys
faint,
Thy handmaid Frost with spangled
tissue quaint
Thy cradle decks ;—to chant thy birth,
thou hast
No meaner Poet than the whistling Blast,
And Desolation is thy Patron-saint !
She guards thee, ruthless Power ! who
would not spare
Those mighty forests, once the bison's
screen,
Where stalked the huge deer to his
shaggy lair !
Through paths and alleys roofed with
darkest green ;
Thousands of years before the silent air
Was pierced by whizzing shaft of hunter-
keen !

III

How shall I paint thee ?—Be this naked
stone
My seat, while I give way to such intent ;
Pleased could my verse, a speaking
monument,
Make to the eyes of men thy features
known.
But as of all those tripping lambs not
one
Outruns his fellows, so hath Nature lent
To thy beginning nought that doth
present
Peculiar ground for hope to build upon.
To dignify the spot that gives thee birth,
No sign of hoar Antiquity's esteem
Appears, and none of modern Fortune's
care ;
Yet thou thyself hast round thee shed a
gleam
Of brilliant moss, instinct with freshness
rare ;
Prompt offering to thy Foster-mother,
Earth !

IV

TAKE, cradled Nursling of the mountain,
take
This parting glance, no negligent adieu !
A Protean change seems wrought while I
pursue
The curves, a loosely-scattered chain
doth make ;
Or rather thou appear'st a glistening
snake,
Silent, and to the gazer's eye untrue,

¹ The deer alluded to is the Leigh, a gigantic
species long since extinct.

Thridding with sinuous lapse the rushes,
through
Dwarf willows gliding, and by ferny
brake.
Starts from a dizzy steep the undaunted
Rill
Robed instantly in garb of snow-white
foam ;
And laughing dares the Adventurer,
who hath clomb
So high, a rival purpose to fulfil ;
Else let the dastard backward wend, and
roam.
Seeking less bold achievement, where he
will !

V

SOLE listener, Duddon ! to the breeze
that played
With thy clear voice, I caught the fitful
sound
Wafted o'er sullen moss and craggy
mound—
Unfruitful solitudes, that seemed to
upbraid
The sun in heaven !—but now, to form
a shade
For Thee, green alders have together
wound
Their foliage ; ashes flung their arms
around ;
And birch-trees risen in silver colonnade.
And thou hast also trumpeted here to
rise,
'Mid sheltering pines, this Cottage rude
and grey ;
Whose ruddy children, by the mother's
eyes
Carelessly watched, sport through the
summer day,
Thy pleased associates :—light as endless
May
On infant bosoms lonely Nature lies.

VI

FLOWERS

ERE yet our course was graced with
social trees
It lacked not old remains of hawthorn
bowers,
Where small birds warbled to their para-
mours ;
And, earlier still, was heard the hum of
bees ;
I saw them ply their harmless robberies,
And caught the fragrance which the
sundry flowers,
Fed by the stream with soft perpetual
showers,
Plenteously yielded to the vagrant breeze.
There bloomed the strawberry of the
wilderness ;
The trembling eyebright showed her
sapphire blue,

The thyme her purple, like the blush of
Even;
And if the breath of some to no caress
Invited, forth they peeped so fair to
view,
All kinds alike seemed favourites of
Heaven.

VII

"CHANGE me, some God, into that
breathing rose!"
The love-sick Stripling fancifully sighs,
The envied flower beholding, as it lies
On Laura's breast, in exquisite repose;
Or he would pass into her bird, that
throws
The darts of song from out its wiry
cage;
Enraptured,—could he for himself en-
gage
The thousandth part of what the Nymph
bestows;
And what the little careless innocent
Ungraciously receives. Too daring
choice!
There are whose calmer mind it would
content
To be an uncultured floweret of the glen,
Fearless of plough and scythe; or dark-
ling wren
That tunes on Duddon's banks her
slender voice.

VIII

WHAT aspect bore the Man who roved
or fled,
First of his tribe, to this dark dell—
who first [thirst?
In this pellucid Current slaked his
What hopes came with him? what
designs were spread
Along his path? His unprotected bed
What dreams encompassed? Was the
intruder nursed
In hideous usages, and rites accursed,
That thinned the living and disturbed
the dead?
No voice replies;—both air and earth
are mute;
And Thou, blue Streamlet, murmuring
yield'st no more
Than a soft record, that, whatever fruf.
Of ignorance thou might'st witness
heretofore,
Thy function was to heal and to restore;
To soothe and cleanse, not madden and
pollute!

IX

THE STEPPING-STONES

The struggling Rill insensibly is grown
Into a Brook of loud and stately march,
Crossed ever and anon by plank or
arch;

And, for like use, lo! what might seem a
zone
Chosen for ornament—stone matched
with stone
In studied symmetry, with interspace
For the clear waters to pursue their race
Without restraint. How swiftly have
they flown,
Succeeding—still succeeding! Here
the Child
Puts, when, the high-swollen Flood runs
fierce and wild,
His budding courage to the proof; and
here
Declining Manhood learns to note the
sly
And sure encroachments of infirmity,
Thinking how fast time runs, life's end
how near!

X

THE SAME SUBJECT

Not so that Pair whose youthful spirits
dance
With prompt emotion, urging them to
pass;
A sweet confusion checks the Shepherd-
lass;
Blushing she eyes the dizzy flood askance;
To stop ashamed—too timid to advance;
She ventures once again—another pause!
His outstretched hand He tauntingly
withdraws—
She sues for help with piteous utter-
ance!
Chidden she chides again; the thrilling
touch
Both feel, when he renews the wished-
for aid:
Ah! if their fluttering hearts should stir
too much,
Should beat too strongly, both may be
betrayed.
The frolic Loves, who, from yon high
rock, see
The struggle, clap their wings for vic-
tory!

XI

THE FAERY CHAÏN

No fiction was it of the antique age:
A sky-blue stone, within this sunless
cleft,
Is of the very foot-marks unbereft
Which tiny Elves impressed;—on that
smooth stage
Dancing with all their brilliant equipage
In secret revels—happily after theft
Of some sweet Babe—Flower stolen,
and coarse weed left
For the distracted Mother to assuage
Her grief with, as she might!—But,
where, oh! where

Is traceable a vestige of the notes
That ruled those dances wild in character?—

Deep underground? Or in the upper air,
On the shrill wind of midnight? or
Where floats
O'er twilight fields the autumnal gossamer?

XII

HINTS FOR THE FANCY

ON, loitering Muse—the swift Stream
chides us—on!

Albeit his deep-worn channel doth
immure
Objects immense portrayed in miniature,
Wild shapes for many a strange comparison!

Niagaras, Alpine passes, and anon
Abodes of Naiads, calm abysses pure,
Bright liquid mansions, fashioned to endure

When the broad oak drops, a leafless
skeleton.

And the solidities of mortal pride,
Palaces and towers, are crumbled into
dust!

The Bard who walks with Duddon, for his
guide,

Shall find such toys of fancy thickly set:
Turn from the sight, enamoured Muse—
we must:

And, if thou canst, leave them without
regret!

XIII

OPEN PROSPECT

HAIL to the fields—with Dwellings
sprinkled o'er,

And one small hamlet, under a green hill
Clustering, with barn and byre, and
spouting mill!

A glance suffices;—should we wish for
Gay June would scorn us. But when
bleak winds roar

Through the stiff lance-like shoots of
pollard ash,

Bread swell of sound! loud as the gusts
that lash

The matted forests of Ontario's shore
By wasteful steel unsmitten—then
would I

Turn into port; and, reckless of the gale,
Reckless of angry Duddon sweeping by,
While the warm hearth exalts the mantling
ale,

Laugh with the generous household
heartily

At all the merry pranks of Donnerdale!

XIV

O MOUNTAIN Stream! the Shepherd and
his Cot

Are privileged inmates of deep solitude;

Nor would the nicest Anchorite exclude
A field or two of brighter green, or plot
Of tillage-ground, that seemeth like a

spot
Of stationary sunshine:—thou hast
viewed

These only, Duddon! with their paths
renewed

By fits and starts, yet this contents thee
not.

Thine bath some awful Spirit impelled to
leave,

Utterly to desert, the haunts of men,
Though simple thy companions were
and few;

And through this wilderness a passage
cleave

Attended but by thy own voice, save
when

The clouds and fowls of the air thy way
pursue!

XV

FROM this deep chasm, where quivering
sunbeams play

Upon its loftiest crags, mine eyes behold
A gloomy niche, capacious, blank, and
cold:

A concave free from shrubs and mosses
grey;

In semblance fresh, as if, with wire
affray,

Some Statue, placed amid these regions
old

For tutelary service, thence had rolled,
Startling the flight of timid Yesterday!

Was it by mortals sculptured?—weary
slaves

Of slow endeavour! or abruptly cast
Into rude shape by fire, with roaring
blast

Tempestuously let loose from central
caves?

Or fashioned by the turbulence of waves,
Then, when o'er highest hills the Deluge
pass'd?

XVI

AMERICAN TRADITION

SUCH fruitless questions may not long
beguile

Or plague the fancy 'mid the sculptured
shows

Conspicuous yet where Oroonoko flows;
There would the Indian answer with a
smile

Aimed at the White Man's ignorance the
while,

Of the GREAT WATERS telling how they
rose,

Covered the plains, and, wandering
where they chose,

Mounted through every intricate dell,

Triumphant.—Inundation wide and deep,
O'er which his Fathers urged, to ridge
and steep
Else unapproachable, their buoyant way;
And carved, on mural cliff's undreaded
side,
Sun, moon, and stars, and beast of chase
or prey;
Whate'er they sought, shunned, loved, or
deified!¹

XVII

RETURN

A DARK plume fetch me from yon
basted yew,
Perched on whose top the Danish Raven
croaks;
Aloft, the imperial Bird of Rome invokes
Departed ages, shedding where he flew
Loose fragments of wild wailing, that be-
strew [rocks];
The clouds and thrill the chambers of the
And into silence hush the timorous flocks,
That, calmly couching while the nightly
dew
Moistened each fleece, beneath the
twinkling stars
Slept amid that lone Camp on Hard-
knot's height,²
Whose Guardians bent the knee to Jove
and Mars:
Or, near that mystic Round of Druid
frame
Tardily sinking by its proper weight
Deep into patient Earth, from whose
smooth breast it came!

XVIII

SEATHWAITE CHAPEL

SACRED Religion! "mother of form and
fear,"
Dread arbitress of mutable respect,
New rites ordaining when the old are
wrecked,
Or cease to please the fickle worshipper;
Mother of Love! (that name best suits
thee here)
Mother of Love! for this deep vale, pro-
tect [effect],
Truth's holy lamp, pure source of bright
light to purge the vapoury atmosphere
That seeks to stifle it;—as in those days
When this low Pile³ a Gospel Teacher
knew,
Whose good works formed an endless
retinue:
A Pastor such as Chaucer's verse pour-
trays;
Such as the heaven-taught skill of Her-
bert drew;
In And tender Goldsmith crowned with
Crown, deathless praise!

¹ See Humboldt's Personal Narrative.² See Note.³ See Note.

XIX

TRIBUTARY STREAM

MY frame hath often trembled with
delight
When hope presented some far-distant
good,
That seemed from heaven descending,
like the flood
Of yon pure waters, from their æry
height
Hurrying, with lordly Duddon to unite;
Who, 'mid a world of images imprest
On the calm depth of his transparent
breast,
Appears to cherish most that Torment
white,
The fairest, softest, liveliest of them all!
And seldom hath ear listened to a tune
More lulling than the busy hum of Noon,
Sworn by that voice—whose murmur
musical
Announces to the thirsty fields a boon
Dewy and fresh, till showers again shall
fall.

XX

THE PLAIN OF DONNERDALE

THE old invective Poets, had they seen,
Or rather felt, the entrenchment that
detains
Thy waters, Duddon! 'mid these flowery
plains;
The still repose, the liquid lapse serene,
Transferred to bowers imperishably green,
Had beautified Elysium! But these
chains
Will soon be broken;—a rough course
remains.
Rough as the past; where Thou, of placid
mien,
Innocuous as a firstling of the flock,
And countenanced like a soft cerulean
sky,
Shalt change thy temper; and, with many
a shock
Given and received in mutual jeopardy,
Dance, like a Bacchanal, from rock to
rock,
Tossing her frantic thyrsus wide and
high!

XXI

WHENCE that low voice?—A whisper
from the heart,
That told of days long past, when here
"I roved"
With friends, and kindred tenderly be-
loved;
Some who had early mandates to depart,
Yet are allowed to steal my path athwart
By Duddon's side; once more do we
unite,
Once more beneath the kind Earth's tran-
quil light!

And smothered joys into new being
start.

From her unworthy seat, the cloudy
stall

Of Time, breaks forth triumphant
Memory ;

Her glistening tresses bound, yet light
and free

As golden locks of birch, that rise and
fall

On gales that breathe too gently to
recall

Aught of the fading year's inclemency !

XXII

TRADITION

A LOVE-LORN Maid, at some far-distant
time,

Came to this hidden pool, whose depths
surpass

In crystal clearness Dian's looking-glass ;
And, gazing, saw that Rose, which from

the prime
Derives its name, reflected as the chime

Of echo doth reverberate some sweet
sound :

The starry treasure from the blue pro-
found

She longed to ravish ;—shall she plunge,
or climb

The humid precipice, and seize the guest
Of April, smiling high in upper air ?

Desperate alternative ! what fiend could
dare

To prompt the thought ?—Upon the
steep rock's breast

The lonely Primrose yet renews its
bloom,

Untouched memento of her hapless
doom !

XXIII

SHEEP-WASHING

SAD thoughts, avant !—partake we
their blithe cheer

Who gathered in betimes the unshorn
flock

To wash the fleece, where haply bands
of rock,

Checking the stream, make a pool smooth
and clear

As this we look on. Distant Mountains
hear,

Hear and repeat, the turmoil that unites
Clamour of boys with innocent despites.

Of barking dogs, and bleatings from
strange fear.

And what if Duddon's spotless flood
receive

Unwelcome mixtures as the uncouth
noise

Thickens, the pastoral River will forgive
Such wrong ; nor need we blame the

licensed joys.

W. B.

Though false to Nature's quiet equipage
Frank are the sports, the stains are
fugitive.

XXIV

THE RESTING-PLACE

MID-NOON is past ;—upon the sultry
mead [throws :

No zephyr breathes, no cloud its shadow
If we advance unstrengthened by repose,

Farewell the solace of the vagrant reed !
This Nook—with woodbine hung and

straggling weed,
Tempting recess as ever pilgrim chose,

Half grot, half harbour—proffers to enclose
Body and mind, from molestation freed,

In narrow compass—narrow as itself :
Or if the Fancy, too industrious Elf,

Be loth that we should breathe awhile
exempt

From new incitements friendly to our
task,

Here wants not stealthy prospect, that
may tempt

Loose Idles to forego her wily mask.

XXV

METHINKS 'twere no unprecedented feat
Should some benignant Minister of air

Lift, and encircle with a cloudy chair,
The One for whom my heart shall ever

beat
With tenderest love ;—or, if a safer seat

Atween his downy wings be furnished,
there

Would lodge her, and the cherished bur-
den bear

O'er hill and valley to this dim retreat !
Rough ways my steps have trod ;—too

rough and long
For her companionship ; here dwells soft

ease :
With sweets that she partakes not some

distaste
Mingles, and lurking consciousness of

wrong ;
Languish the flowers ; the waters seem

to waste
Their vocal charm ; their sparklings cease

to please.

XXVI

RETURN, Content ! for fondly I pursued,
Even when a child, the Streams—un-

heard, unseen ;
Through tangled woods, impending rocks

between ;
On free as air, with flying inquest

viewed
The sullen reservoirs whence their bold

brood—
Pure as the morning, fretful, boisterous,

keen,
Green as the salt-sea billows, white and

green—

X.

Poured down the hills, a choral multitude;
 Nor have I tracked their course for scanty gains;
 They taught me random cares and truant joys,
 That shield from mischief and preserve from stains
 Vague minds, while men are growing out of boys;
 Maturer Fancy owes to their rough noise
 Impetuous thoughts that brook not servile reins.

XXVII

FALLEN, and diffused into a shapeless heap,
 Or quietly self-buried in earth's mould,
 Is that embattled House, whose massy Keep
 Flung from yon cliff a shadow large and cold.
 There dwelt the gay, the bountiful, the bold;
 Till nightly lamentations, like the sweep
 Of winds—though winds were silent—struck a deep
 And lasting terror through that ancient Hold.
 Its line of Warriors fled;—they shrank when tried
 By ghostly power;—but Time's ing hand
 Hath plucked such mystic Round, and spar-
 kly plucked such fors. like weeds
 from out the land;
 And now, if men with men in peace abide,
 All other strength the weakest may withstand,
 All worse assaults may safely be defied.

XXVIII

JOURNEY RENEWED

I rose while yet the cattle beat-oppress,
 Crowded together under rustling trees
 Brushed by the current of the water-breeze;
 And for their sakes, and love of all that rest.
 On Duddon's margin, in the sheltering nest;
 For all the startled scaly tribes that slink
 Into his coverts, and each fearless link
 Of dancing insects forged upon his breast;
 For these, and hopes and recollections worn
 Close to the vital seat of human clay:
 Glad meetings, tender partings, that up-stay
 The drooping mind of absence, by vows sworn

In his pure presence near the trying thorn—
 I thanked the Leader of my onward way.

XXIX

No record tells of lance opposed to lance,
 Horse charging horse, 'mid these retired domains;
 Tells that their turf drank purple from the veins
 Of heroes, fallen, or struggling to advance,
 Till doubtful combat issued in a trance
 Of victory, that struck through heart and reins
 Even to the inmost seat of mortal pain
 And lightened o'er the pallid countenance.
 Yet, to the loyal and the brave, who lie
 In the blank earth, neglected and forlorn,
 The passing Winds memorial tribute pay;
 The Torrents chant their praise, inspir-
 ing scorn
 Of power usurped; with proclamation high,
 And glad acknowledgment, of lawful sway.

XXX

Who swerves from innocence, who makes divorce
 Of that serene companion—a good name,
 Recovers not his loss: but walks with shame,
 With doubt, with fear, and haply with remorse;
 And oft-times he—who, yielding to the force
 Of chance-temptation, ere his journey end,
 From chosen comrade turns, or faithful friend—
 In vain shall rue the broken intercourse.
 Not so with such as loosely wear the chain
 That binds them, pleasant River! to thy side:—
 Through the rough copse wheel thou with hasty stride;
 I choose to saunter o'er the grassy plain,
 Sure, when the separation has been tried,
 That we, who part in love, shall meet again.

XXXI

THE KIRK OF ULPHA to the pilgrim's eye
 Is welcome as a star, that doth present
 Its shining forehead through the peaceful rent
 Of a black cloud diffused o'er half the sky:
 Or as a fruitful palm-tree towering high

O'er the parched waste beside an Arab's
tent ;
Or the Indian tree whose branches, down-
ward bent,
Take root again, a boundless canopy.*
How sweet were leisure ! could it yield no
more
Than 'mid that wave-washed Church-
yard to recline,
From pastoral graves extracting thoughts
divine ;
Or there to pace, and mark the summits
hoar (shine,
Of distant moon-lit mountains faintly
Soothed by the unseen River's gentle
roar.

XXXII

Nor hurled precipitous from steep to
steep ;
Lingering no more 'mid flower-enamelled
lands
And blooming thickets ; nor by rocky
bands [Deep
Held ; but in radiant progress toward the
Where mightiest rivers into powerless
sleep [pands
Sigh, and forget their nature—now ex-
Majestic Duddon, over silted at sands
Gliding in silence with unfettered sweep !
Beneath an ampler sky a region wide
Is opened round him :—hamlets, towers,
and towns,
And blue-topped hills, behold him from
afar ;
In stately mien to sovereign Thames
allied
Spreading his bosom under Kentish
downs,
With commerce freighted, or triumphant
war.

XXXIII

CONCLUSION

But here no cannon thunders to the
gale ;

Upon the wave no haughty pendants
cast
A crimson splendour : lowly is the mast
That rises here, and humbly spread, the
sail :
While, less disturbed than in the narrow
Vale
Through which with strange vicissitudes
he passed,
The Wanderer seeks that receptacle vast
Where all his unambitious functions fail.
And may thy Poet, cloud-born Stream !
be free—
The sweets of earth contentedly resigned,
And each tumultuous working left behind
At seemingly distance—to advance like
Thee ;
Prepared, in peace of heart, in calm of
mind
And soul, to mingle with Eternity !

XXXIV

AFTER-THOUGHT

*I THOUGHT of Thee, my partner and my
guide,
As being past away.—Vain sympathies !
For, backward, Duddon ! as I cast my
eyes,
I see what was, and is, and will abide ;
Still glides the Stream, and shall for ever
glide ;
The Form remains, the Function never
dies ;
While we, the brave, the mighty, and the
wise,
We Men, who in our morn of youth
defied
The elements, must vanish ;—be it so !
Enough, if something from our hands have
power
To live, and act, and serve the future hour ;
And if, as toward the silent tomb we go,
Through love, through hope, and faith's
transcendent power,
We feel that we are greater than we know.*

THE WHITE DOE OF RYLSTONE

OR,
THE FATE OF THE NORTONS
ADVERTISEMENT

DURING the Summer of 1807, I visited, for the first time, the beautiful country that sur-
rounds Bolton Priory, in Yorkshire ; and the Poem of the WHITE DOE, founded upon a
Tradition connected with that place, was composed at the close of the same year.

DEDICATION

In trellised shed with clustering roses gay,
And, MARY ! oft beside our blazing fire,
When years of wedded life were as a day
Whose current answers to the heart's desire,
Did we together read in Spenser's Lay
How Una, sad of soul—in sad attire,
The gentle Una, of celestial birth, [earth.
To seek her Knight went wandering o'er the

Ah, then, Beloved ! pleasing was the smart,
And the tear precious in compassion shed
For Her, who, pierced by sorrow's thrilling dart,
Did meekly bear the pang unmerited ;
Meek as that emblem of her lowly heart
The milk-white Lamb which in a line she led,—
And faithful, loyal in her innocence,
Like the brave Lion slain in her defence.

Notes could we hear as of a fairy shell
 Attuned to words with sacred wisdom fraught;
 Free Fancy prized each specious miracle,
 And all its finer inspiration caught;
 Till in the bosom of our rustic Cell,
 We by a lamentable change were taught
 That "bliss with mortal Man may not abide;"
 How nearly joy and sorrow are allied!
 For us the stream of fiction ceased to flow,
 For us the voice of melody was mute.
 —But, as soft gales dissolve the dreary snow,
 And give the timid herbage leave to shoot,
 Heaven's breathing influence failed not to bestow
 A timely promise of unlooked-for fruit,
 Fair fruit of pleasure and serene content
 From blossoms of wild fancies innocent.
 It soothed us—it beguiled us—then, to hear
 Once more of troubles wrought by magic spell;
 And griefs whose aery motion comes not near
 The pangs that tempt the Spirit to rebel:
 Then, with mild Una in her sober cheer,
 High over hill and low adown the dell
 Again we wandered, willing to partake
 All that she suffered for her dear Lord's sake.
 Then, too, this Song of mine once more could
 please,

Where anguish, strange as dreams of restless
 sleep,
 Is tempered and allayed by sympathies
 Aloft ascending, and descending deep;
 Even to the inferior Kinds; whom forest-trees
 Protect from beating sunbeams, and the sweep
 Of the sharp winds;—fair Creatures—to whom
 Heaven
 A calm and sinless life, with love, hath given.
 This tragic Story cheered us; for it speaks
 Of female patience winning firm repose;
 And, of the recompense that conscience seeks,
 A bright, encouraging, example shows;
 Needful when o'er wide realms the tempest
 breaks.
 Needful amid life's ordinary woes;—
 Hence, not for them unfitted who would bless
 A happy hour with holier happiness.
 He serves the Muses erringly and ill,
 Whose aim is pleasure light and fugitive:
 O, that my mind were equal to fulfil
 The comprehensive mandate which they give—
 Vain aspiration of an earnest will!
 Yet in this moral Strain a power may live,
 Beloved Wife! such solace to impart
 As it hath yielded to thy tender heart.

RyDAL MOUNT, WESTMORELAND,
 April 20, 1815.

Action is transitory—a step, a blow,
 The motion of a muscle—this way or that—
 'Tis done; and in the after-vacancy
 We wonder at ourselves like men betrayed:
 Suffering is permanent, obscure and dark,
 And has the nature of infinity.
 Yet through that darkness (infinite though it seem

And (removeable) gracious openings lie
 By which the soul—with patient steps of
 thought
 Now toiling, waited now on wings of prayer—
 May pass in hope, and, though from mortal bonds
 Yet undelivered, rise with sure ascent
 Even to the fountain-head of peace divine.

"They that deny a God, destroy Man's nobility: for certainly Man is of kinn to the Beast by his Body; and if he be not of kinn to God by his Spirit, he is a base ignoble Creature. It destroys likewise Magnanimity, and the raising of humane Nature: for take an example of a Dogg, and mark what a generosity and courage he will put on, when he finds himself maintained by a Man, who to him is instead of a God, or Mellior Natura. Which courage is manifestly such, as that Creature without that confidence of a better Nature than his own could never attain. So man, when he resteth and assureth himself upon Divine protection and favour, gathereth a force and faith which human Nature in itself could not obtain."

LORD BACON.

CANTO FIRST

FROM Bolton's old monastic tower
 The bells ring loud with gladsome power;
 The sun shines bright; the fields are
 gay
 With people in their best array
 Of stole and doublet, hood and scarf,
 Along the banks of crystal Wharf,
 Through the Vale retired and lowly,
 Trooping to that summons holy.
 And, up among the moorlands, see
 What sprinklings of blithe company!
 Of lasses and of shepherd grooms,
 That down the steep hills force their way,
 Like cattle through the budded brooms;
 Path, or no path, what care they?

And thus in joyous mood they hie
 To Bolton's mouldering Priory.

What would they there?—Full fifty
 years

That sumptuous Pile, with all its peers,
 Too harshly hath been doomed to taste
 The bitterness of wrong and waste:
 Its courts are ravaged; but the tower
 Is standing with a voice of power,
 That ancient voice which wont to call
 To mass or some high festival;
 And in the shattered fabric's heart
 Remaineth one protected part:
 A Chapel, like a wild-bird's nest,
 Closely embowered and trimly drest;
 And thither young and old repair,
 This Sabbath-day, for praise and prayer.

Fast the church-yard fills;—anon
 Look again, and they all are gone;
 The cluster round the porch, and the
 folk [Oak!
 Who sate in the shade of the Prior's
 And scarcely have they disappeared
 Ere the prelusive hymn is heard:—
 With one consent the people rejoice,
 Filling the church with a lofty voice!
 They sing a service which they feel;
 For 'tis the sunrise now of zeal;
 Of a pure faith the vernal prime—
 In great Eliza's golden time.

A moment ends the fervent din,
And all is hushed, without and within.
For though the priest, more tranquilly,
Recites the holy liturgy,
The only voice which you can hear
Is the river murmuring near.
—When soft l—the dusky trees between,
And down the path through the open
green,

Where is no living thing to be seen;
And through yon gateway, where is
found,

Beneath the arch with ivy bound,
Free entrance to the church-yard
ground—

Comes gliding in with lovely gleam,
Comes gliding in serene and slow,
Soft and silent as a dream,
A solitary Doe!

White she is as lily of June,
And beauteous as the silver moon
When out of sight the clouds are driven
And she is left alone in heaven;
Or like a ship some gentle day
In sunshine sailing far away,
A little ship, that hath the plain
Of ocean for her own domain.

Lie silent in your graves, ye dead!
Lie quiet in your church-yard bed!
Ye living, tend your holy cares;
Ye multitude, pursue your prayers;
And blame me not if my heart and sight
Are occupied with one delight!
'Tis a work for sabbath hours
If I with this bright Creature go:
Whether she be of forest bowers,
From the bowers of earth below;
Or a Spirit for one day given,
A pledge of grace from purest heaven.

What harmonious pensive changes
Wait upon her as she ranges
Round and through this Pile of state
Overthrown and desolate!
Now a step or two her way
Leads through space of open day,
Where the enamoured sunny light
Brightens her that was so bright;
Now doth a delicate shadow fall,
Falls upon her like a breath,
From some lofty arch or wall,
As she passes underneath:
Now some gloomy nook partakes
Of the glory that she makes,—
High-ribbed vault of stone, or cell,
With perfect cunning framed as well
Of stone, and ivy, and the spread
Of the elder's bushy head;
Some jealous and forbidding cell,
That doth the living stars repel,
And where no flower hath leave to
dwell.

The presence of this wandering Doe
Fills many a damp obscure recess
With lustre of a saintly show;
And, reappearing, she no less
Sheds on the flowers that round her blow
A more than sunny liveliness.
But say, among these holy places,
Which thus assiduously she paces,
Comes she with a votary's task,
Rite to perform, or boon to ask?
Fair Pilgrim! harbours she a sense
Of sorrow, or of reverence?

Can she be grieved for quire or shrine,
Crushed as if by wrath divine?
For what survives of house where God
Was worshipped, or where Man abode;
For old magnificence undone;
Or for the gentler work begun

By Nature, softening and concealing,
And busy with a hand of healing?
Mourns she for lordly chamber's hearth
That to the sapling ash gives birth;
For dormitory's length laid bare
Where the wild rose blossoms fair;
Or altar, whence the cross was rent,
Now rich with mossy ornament?

—She sees a warrior carved in stone,
Among the thick weeds, stretched alone;
A warrior, with his shield of pride
Cleaving humbly to his side,
And hands in resignation prest,
Palm to palm, on his tranquil breast;
As little she regards the sight
As a common creature might:
If she be doomed to inward care,
Or service, it must lie elsewhere.

—But hers are eyes serenely bright,
And on she moves—with pace how light!
Nor spares to stoop her head, and taste
The dewy turf with flowers bestrown;
And thus she fares, until at last
Beside the ridge of a grassy grave
In quietness she lays her down;
Gentle as a weary wave
Sinks, when the summer breeze hath
died,

Against an anchored vessel's side;
Even so, without distress, doth she
Lie down in peace, and lovingly.

The day is placid in its going,
To a lingering motion bound,
Like the crystal stream now flowing
With its softest summer sound:
So the balmy minutes pass,
While this radiant Creature lies
Couched upon the dewy grass,
Pensively with downcast eyes.
—But now again the people raise
With awful cheer a voice of praise;
It is the last, the parting song;
And from the temple forth they throng,
And quickly spread themselves abroad.

While each pursues his several road.
But some—a variegated band
Of middle-aged, and old, and young,
And little children by the hand
Upon their leading mothers hung—
With mute obeisance gladly paid
Turn towards the spot, where, full in
view,

The white Doe, to her service true,
Her sabbath couch has made.

It was a solitary mound :
Which two spears' length of level ground
Did from all other graves divide :
As if in some respect of pride ;
Or melancholy's sickly mood,
Still shy of human neighbourhood ;
Or guilt, that humbly would express
A penitential louchness.

"Look, there she is, my Child ! draw
near ;
She fears not, wherefore should we fear ?
She means no harm ;"—but still the
Boy,
To whom the words were softly said,
Hung back, and smiled, and blushed for
joy,
A shame-faced blush of glowing red !
Again the Mother whispered low,
"Now you have seen the famous Doe ;
From Rylstone she hath found her way
Over the hills this sabbath day ;
Her work, whate'er it be, is done,
And she will depart when we are gone ;
Thus doth she keep, from year to year,
Her sabbath morning, foul or fair."

Bright was the Creature, as in dreams
The Boy had seen her, yea, more bright ;
But is she truly what she seems ?
He asks with insecure delight.
Asks of himself, and doubts,—and still
The doubt returns against his will :
Though he, and all the standers-by,
Could tell a tragic history
Of facts divulged, wherein appear
Substantial motive, reason clear,
Why thus the milk-white Doe is found
Couchant beside that lonely mound ;
And why she duly loves to pace
The circuit of this hallowed place.
Nor to the Child's inquiring mind
Is such perplexity confined :
For, spite of sober Truth that sees
A world of fixed remembrances
Which to this mystery belong,
If, undecieved, my skill can trace
The characters of every face,
There lack not strange delusion here,
Conjecture vague, and idle fear,
And superstitious fancies strong,
Which do the gentle Creature wrong.

That bearded, staff-supported Sire—
Who in his boyhood often fed
Full cheerily on convent-bread
And heard old tales by the convent-fire,
And to his grave will go with soars,
Relics of long and distant wars—
That old Man, studious to expound
The spectacle, is mounting high
To days of dim antiquity ;
When Lady Aäliza mourned,
Her Son, and felt in her despair
The pang of unavailing prayer ;
Her Son in Wharf's abysses drowned,
The noble Boy of Egremound.
From which affliction—when the grace
Of God had in her heart found place—
A pious structure, fair to see,
Rose up, this stately Priory !
The Lady's work ;—but now laid low ;
To the grief of her soul that doth come
and go,
In the beautiful form of this innocent
Doe :
Which, though seemingly doomed in its
breast to sustain
A softened remembrance of sorrow and
pain,
Is spotless, and holy, and gentle, and
bright ;
And glides o'er the earth like an angel of
light.

Pass, pass who will, yon chantry door ;
And, through the chink in the fractured
floor
Look down, and see a griesly sight ;
A vault where the bodies are buried
upright !
There, face by face, and hand by hand,
The Claphams and Mauleverers stand ;
And, in his place, among son and sire,
Is John de Clapham, that fierce Esquire,
A valiant man, and a name of dread
In the ruthless wars of the White and
Red :
Who dragged Earl Pembroke from Ban-
bury church
And smote off his head on the stones of
the porch !
Look down among them, if you dare ;
Oft does the White Doe loiter there,
Prying into the darksome rent ;
Nor can it be with good intent :
So thinks that Dame of haughty air,
Who hath a Page her book to hold,
And wears a frontlet edged with gold.
Harsh thoughts with her high mood
agree—
Who counts among her ancestry
Earl Pembroke, slain so impiously !

That slender Youth, a scholar pale,
From Oxford come to his native vale,

He also hath his own conceit :
It is, thinks he, the gracious Fairy,
Who loved the Shepherd-lord to meet
In his wanderings solitary :
Wild notes she in his hearing sang,
A song of Nature's hidden powers ;
That whistled like the wind, and rang
Among the rocks and holly bowers.
'Twas said that She all shapes could
wear ;

And oftentimes before him stood,
Amid the trees of some thick wood,
In semblance of a lady fair ;
And taught him signs, and showed him
sights,

In Craven's dens, on Cimbrian heights ;
When under cloud of fear he lay,
A shepherd clad in homely grey ;
Nor left him at his later day.

And hence, when he, with spear and
shield,

Rode full of years to Flodden-field,
His eye could see the hidden spring,
And how the current was to flow ;
The fatal end of Scotland's King.
And all that hopeless overthrow.

But not the wars did he delight,
The Clifford wished for worthier might ;
Nor in broad pomp, or costly state ;
Him his own thoughts did elevate,—
Most happy in the shy recess
Of Barden's lowly quietness.

And choice of studious friends had he
Of Bolton's dear fraternity ;

Who, standing on this old church tower,
In many a calm propitious hour,
Perused, with him, the starry sky ;
Or, in their cells, with him did pry
For other lore,—by keen desire
Urged to close toil with chemic fire ;
In quest belike of transmutations
Rich as the mine's most bright crea-
tions.

But they and their good works are fled,
And all is now disquieted—
And peace is none, for living or dead !

Ah, pensive Scholar, think not so,
But look again at the radiant Doe !
What quiet watch she seems to keep,
Alone, beside that grassy heap !
Why mention other thoughts unmeet
For vision so composed and sweet ?
While stand the people in a ring,
Gazing, doubting, questioning ;
Yea, many overcome in spite
Of recollections clear and bright ;
Which yet do unto some impart
An undisturbed repose of heart.
And all the assembly own a law
Of orderly respect and awe ;
But see—they vanish one by one,
And last, the Doe herself is gone.

Harp ! we have been full long beguiled
By vague thoughts, lured by fancies wild ;
To which, with no reluctant strings,
Thou hast attuned thy murmurings ;
And now before this Pile we stand
In solitude, and utter peace :
But, Harp ! thy murmurs may not
cease—

A Spirit, with his angelic wings,
In soft and breeze-like visitings,
Has touched thee—and a Spirit's hand
A voice is with us—a command
To chant, in strains of heavenly glory,
A tale of tears, a mortal story !

CANTO SECOND

THE Harp in lowliness obeyed ;
And first we sang of the green-wood
shade

And a solitary Maid ;
Beginning, where the song must end,
With her, and with her sylvan Friend ;
The Friend who stood before her sight,
Her only unextinguished light ;
Her last companion in a dearth
Of love, upon a hopeless earth.

For She it was—this Maid, who wrought
Meekly, with foreboding thought,
In vermeil colours and in gold
An unblest work ; which, standing by,
Her Father did with joy behold,—
Exulting in its imagery :
A Banner, fashioned to fulfil
Too perfectly his headstrong will :
For on this Banner had her hand
Embroidered (such her Sire's command)
The sacred Cross ; and figured there
The five dear wounds our Lord did bear ;
Full soon to be uplifted high,
And float in rueful company !

It was the time when England's
Queen
Twelve years had reigned, a Sovereign
dread ;

Nor yet the restless crown had been
Disturbed upon her virgin head ;
But now the inly-working North
Was ripe to send its thousands forth,
A potent vassalage, to fight
In Percy's and in Neville's right,
Two Earls fast leagued in discontent,
Who gave their wishes open vent ;
And boldly urged a general plea,
The rites of ancient piety
To be triumphantly restored,
By the stern justice of the sword !
And that same Banner, on whose breast
The blameless Lady had express
Memorials chosen to give life
And sunshine to a dangerous strife ;
That Banner, waiting for the Call,
Stood quietly in Rylstone-hall.

It came; and Francis Norton said,
 "O Father! rise not in this fray—
 The hairs are white upon your head;
 Dear Father, hear me when I say
 It is for you too late a day!
 Bethink you of your own good name:
 A just and gracious Queen have we,
 A pure religion, and the claim
 Of peace on our humanity.—
 'Tis meet that I endure your scorn;
 I am your son, your eldest born;
 But not for lordship or for land,
 My Father, do I clasp your knees;
 The Banner touch not, stay your hand,
 This multitude of men disbanded,
 And live at home in blameless ease;
 For these my brethren's sake, for me;
 And, most of all, for Emily!"

Tumultuous noises filled the hall;
 And scarcely could the Father hear
 That name—pronounced with a dying
 fall—

The name of his only Daughter dear,
 As on the banner which stood near
 He glanced a look of holy pride,
 And his moist eyes were glorified;
 Then did he seize the staff, and say:
 "Thou, Richard, bear'st thy father's
 name.

Keep thou this ensign till the day
 When I of thee require the same:
 Thy place be on my better hand;
 And seven as true as 'thou, I see,
 Will cleave to this good cause and me."
 He spake, and eight brave sons straight-
 way

All followed him, a gallant band!

Thus, with his sons, when forth he
 came

The sight was hailed with loud acclaim
 And din of arms and minstrelsy,
 From all his warlike tenantry,
 All horsed and harnessed with him to
 ride,—

A voice to which the hills replied!

But Francis, in the vacant hall,
 Stood silent under dreary weight,—
 A phantasm, in which roof and wall
 Shook, tottered, swam before his sight;
 A phantasm like a dream of night!
 Thus overwhelmed, and desolate,
 He found his way to a postern-gate;

And, when he waked, his languid eye
 Was on the calm and silent sky;
 With air about him breathing sweet,
 And earth's green grass beneath his
 feet;

Nor did he fail ere long to hear
 A sound of military cheer,
 Faint—but it reached that sheltered
 spot;

He heard, and it disturbed him not.

There stood he, leaning on a lance
 Which he had grasped unknowingly,
 Had blindly grasped in that strong
 trance,

That dimness of heart-agoony;
 There stood he, cleansed from the despair
 And sorrow of his fruitless prayer.
 The past he calmly hath reviewed:
 But where will be the fortitude
 Of this brave man, when he shall see
 That Form beneath the spreading tree,
 And know that it is Emily?

He saw her where in open view
 She sate beneath the spreading yew—
 Her head upon her lap, concealing
 In solitude her bitter feeling:

"Might ever son command a sire,
 The act were justified to-day."
 This to himself—and to the Maid,
 Whom now he had approached, he said—
 "Gone are they,—they have their desire;
 And I with thee one hour will stay.
 To give thee comfort if I may."

She heard, but looked not up, nor
 spake;
 And sorrow moved him to partake
 Her silence; then his thoughts turned
 roving,
 And fervent words a passage found.

"Gone are they, bravely, though
 misled;
 With a dear Father at their head!
 The Sons obey a natural lord;
 The Father had given solemn word
 To noble Percy; and a force
 Still stronger, bends him to his course.
 This said, our tears to-day may fall
 As at an innocent funeral.

In deep and awful channel runs
 This sympathy of Sire and Sons;
 Untried our Brothers have been loved
 With heart by simple nature moved;
 And now their faithfulness is proved:
 For faithful we must call them, bearing
 That soul of conscientious daring.

—There were they all in circle—there
 Stood Richard, Ambrose, Christopher,
 John with a sword that will not fail,
 And Marmaduke in fearless mail,
 And those bright Twins were side by side;
 And there, by fresh hopes beautified,
 Stood He, whose arm yet lacks the power
 Of man, our youngest, fairest flower!

I, by the right of eldest born,
 And in a second father's place,
 Presumed to grapple with their scorn,
 And meet their pity face to face;
 Yea, trusting in God's holy aid,
 I to my Father knelt and prayed:
 And one, the pensive Marmaduke,
 Methought, was yielding inwardly,

And would have laid his purpose by,
But for a glance of his Father's eye,
Which I myself could scarcely brook.

Then be we, each and all, forgiven !
Thou, chiefly thou, my Sister dear,
Whose pangs are registered in heaven—
The stifled sigh, the hidden tear,
And smiles, that dared to take their
place.

Meek filial smiles, upon thy face,
As that unhallowed Banner grew
Beneath a loving old Man's view.

Thy part is done—thy painful part ;
Be thou then satisfied in heart !

A further, though far easier, task
Than thine hath been, my duties ask ;

With theirs my efforts cannot blend,
I cannot for such cause contend ;

Their aims I utterly forswear ;
But I in body will be there.

Unarmed and naked will I go,
Be at their side, come weal or woe :

On kind occasions I may wait,
See, hear, obstruct, or mitigate.

Bare breast I take and an empty
hand."—1

Therewith he threw away the lance,
Which he had grasped in that strong

trance ;
Spurned it, like something that would

stand
Between him and the pure intent

Of love on which his soul was bent.

" For thee, for thee, is left the sense
Of trial past without offence

To God or man ; such innocence,
Such consolation, and the excess

Of an unmerited distress ;
In that thy very strength must lie.

—O Sister, I could prophesy !
The time is come that rings the knell

Of all we loved, and loved so well :
Hope nothing, if I thus may speak

To thee, a woman, and thence weak :
Hope nothing, I repeat ; for we

Are doomed to perish utterly :
'Tis meet that thou with me divide

The thought while I am by thy side,
Acknowledging a grace in this,

A comfort in the dark abyss.
But look not for me when I am gone,

And be no farther wrought upon :
Farewell all wishes, all debate,

All prayers for this cause, or for that !
Weep, if that aid thee ; but depend

Upon no help of outward friend ;
Espouse thy doom at once, and cleave

To fortitude without reprieve.
For we must fall, both we and ours—

This Mansion and these pleasant bowers,

1 See the old ballad,—“ The Rising of the

North.”

Walks, pools, and arbours, homestead,
hall—

Our fate is theirs, will reach them all :
The young horse must forsake his man-

ger,
And learn to glory in a Stranger ;

The hawk forget his perch ; the hound
Be parted from his ancient ground :

The blast will sweep us all away—
One desolation, one decay !

And even this Creature !” which words
saying,

He pointed to a lovely Doe,
A few steps distant, feeding, straying ;

Fair creature, and more white than
snow !

“ Even she will to her peaceful wood,
Return, and to her murmuring floods,

And be in heart and soul the same
She was before she hither came ;

Ere she had learned to love us all,
Herself beloved in Rylstone-hall.

—But thou, my Sister, doomed to be
The last leaf on a blasted tree ;

If not in vain we breathed the breath
Together of a purer faith ;

If hand in hand we have been led,
And thou, (O happy thought this day !)

Not seldom foremost in the way ;
If on one thought our minds have fed,

And we have in one meaning read ;
If, when at home our private weal

Hath suffered from the shock of zeal,
Together we have learned to prize

Forbearance and self-sacrifice ;
If we like combatants have tared,

And for this issue been prepared ;
If thou art beautiful, and youth

And thought endue thee with all truth—
Be strong ;—be worthy of the grace

Of God, and fill thy destined place :
A Soul, by force of sorrows high,

Uplifted to the purest sky
Of undisturbed humanity !”

He ended,—or she heard no more ;
He led her from the yew-tree shade,

And at the mansion's silent door,
He kissed the consecrated Maid ;

And down the valley then pursued,
Alone, the armed Multitude.

CANTO THIRD

Now joy for you who from the towers
Of Brancepeth look in doubt and fear,

Telling melancholy hours !
Proclaim it, let your Masters hear

That Norton with his band is near !
The watchmen from their station high

Pronounced the word,—and the Earl's
descry,

Well-pleased, the armed Company
Marching down the banks of Were.

Said fearless Norton to the pair
Gone forth to greet him on the plain—
"This meeting, noble Lords! looks fair,
I bring with me a goodly train:
Their hearts are with you: hill and dale
Have helped us: Ure we crossed, and
Swale,

And horse and harness followed—see
The best part of their Yeomanry!
—Stand forth, my Sons!—these eight
are mine,

Whom to this service I commend:
Which way soe'er our fate incline,
These will be faithful to the end:
They are my all"—voice failed him
here—

"My all save one, a Daughter dear!
Whom I have left, Love's mildest birth,
The meekest Child on this blessed earth.
I had—but these are by my side,
These Eight, and this is a day of pride!
The time is ripe. With festive din
Lo! how the people are flocking in,—
Like hungry fowl to the feeder's hand
When snow lies heavy upon the land."

He spake bare truth; for far and near
From every side came noisy swarms
Of Peasants in their homely gear;
And, mixed with these, to Brancepeth
came

Grave Gentry of estate and name,
And Captains known for worth in arms;
And prayed the Earls in self-defence
To rise, and prove their innocence.—

"Rise, noble Earls, put forth your might
For holy Church, and the People's
right!"

The Norton fixed, at this demand,
His eye upon Northumberland,
And said: "The Minds of Men will own
No loyal rest while England's Crown
Remains without an Heir, the bait
Of strife and factions desperate;
Who, paying deadly hate in kind
Through all things else, in this can find
A mutual hope, a common mind;
And plot, and pant to overwhelm
All ancient honour in the realm.
—Brave Earls! to whose heroic veins
Our noblest blood is given in trust,
To you a suffering State complains,
And ye must raise her from the dust.
With wishes of still bolder scope
On you we look, with dearest hope;
Even for our Altars—for the prize
In Heaven, of life that never dies;
For the old and holy Church we mourn,
And must in joy to her return.
Behold!"—and from his Son whose
stand

Was on his right, from that guardian
hand

He took the Banner, and unfurled
The precious folds—"behold," said he,
"The ransom of a sinful world;
Let this your preservation be;
The wounds of hands and feet and side,
And the sacred Cross on which Jesus
died

—This bring I, from an ancient hearth,
These Records wrought in pledge of love
By hands of no ignoble birth,

A Maid o'er whom the blessed Dove
Vouchsafed in gentleness to brood,
While she the holy work pursued."

"Uplift the Standard!" was the cry
From all the listeners that stood round,
"Plant it,—by this we live or die."

The Norton ceased not for that sound,
But said: "The prayer which ye have
heard,

Much injured Earls! by these preferred,
Is offered to the Saints, the sign
Of tens of thousands, secretly."

"Uplift it!" cried once more the Band,
And then a thoughtful pause ensued:
"Uplift it!" said Northumberland—

Who, from all the multitude
Who saw the Banner reared on high
In all its dread emblazonry,
A voice of uttermost joy broke out:

The transport was tolled down the river
of Were,

And Durham, the time-honoured Dur-
ham, did hear,

And the towers of St. Cuthbert were
stirred by the shout!

Now was the North in arms:—they
shine

In war-like trim from Tweed to Tyne,
At Percy's voice: and Neville sees
His Followers gathering in from Tees,
From Were, and all the little rills
Concealed among the forked hills—
Seven hundred Knights, Retainers all
Of Neville, at their Master's call
Had sate together in Raby Hall!
Such strength that Earldom held of yore;
Nor wanted at this time rich store
Of well-appointed chivalry.

—Not loth the sleepy lance to wield,
And greet the old paternal shield,
They heard the summons;—and, further-
more,

Horsemen and Foot of each degree,
Unbound by pledge of fealty,
Appeared, with free and open hate
Of novelties in Church and State;
Knight, burgher, yeoman, and esquire;
And Romish priest, in priest's attire.
And thus, in arms, a zealous Band
Proceeding under joint command,
To Durham first their course they bear;
And in Saint Cuthbert's ancient seat

Sang mass,—and tore the book of
prayer,—
And trod the bible beneath their feet.

Thence marching southward smooth
and free

"They mustered their host at Wetherby.
Full sixteen thousand fair to see ;"¹
The Choicest Warriors of the North !
But none for beauty and for worth
Like those eight Sons—who, in a ring,
(Ripe men, or blooming in life's spring)
Each with a lance, erect and tall,
A falchion, and a buckler small,
Stood by their Sire, on Clifford-moor,
To guard the Standard which he bore.
On foot they girt their father round ;
And so will keep the appointed ground
Where'er their march : no steed will he
Henceforth bestride :—triumphant !
He stands upon the grassy sod,
Trusting himself to the earth, and God.
Rare sight to embolden and inspire !
Proud was the field of Sons and Sire ;
Of him the most ; and, sooth to say,
No shape of man in all the array
So graceful the sunshine of that day.
The monumental pomp of Age
Was with this godly personage ;
A stature undepressed in size,
Umbent, which rather seemed to rise,
In open victory o'er the weight
Of seventy years, to loftier height ;
Magnific limbs of withered state ;
A face to fear and venerate ;
Eyes dark and strong ; and on his head
Bright locks of silver hair, thick spread,
Which a brown morion half-concealed,
Light as a hunter's of the field ;
And thus, with girdle round his waist,
Whereon the Banner-staff might rest
At need, he stood, advancing high
The glittering, floating pageantry.

Who sees him ?—thousands see, and
One

With unparticipated gaze ;
Who, 'mong those thousands, friend hath
none,
And treads in solitary ways.
He, following wheresoe'er he might,
Hath watched the Banner from afar,
As shepherds watch a lonely star,
Or mariners the distant light
That guides them through a stormy
night.
And now, upon a chosen plot
Of rising ground, yon heathy spot !
He takes alone his far-off stand,
With breast unmailed, unweaponed hand.
Bold is his aspect ; but his eye
Is pregnant with anxiety,

While, like a tutelary Power,
He there stands fixed from hour to hour :
Yet sometimes in more humble guise,
Upon the turf-clad height he lies
Stretched, herdsman-like, as if to bask
In sunshine were his only task,
Or by his mantle's help to find
A shelter from the nipping wind :
And thus, with short oblivion blest,
His weary spirits gather rest.
Again he lifts his eyes ; and lo !
The pageant glancing to and fro ;
And hope is awakened by the sight,
He thence may learn, ere fall of night,
Which way the tide is doomed to flow.

To London were the Chieftains bent ;
But what avails the bold intent ?
A Royal army is gone forth
To quell the RISING OF THE NORTH ;
They march with Dudley at their head,
And, in seven days' space, will to York
be led !—
Can such a mighty Host be raised
Thus suddenly, and brought so near ?
The Earls upon each other gazed,
And Neville's cheek grew pale with fear ;
For, with a high and valiant name,
He bore a heart of timid frame ;
And hold it both had been, yet they
"Against so many may not stay."²
Back therefore will they hie to seize
A strong Hold on the banks of Tees ;
There wait a favourable hour,
Until Lord Dacre with his power
From Naworth come ; and Howard's aid
Be with them openly displayed.

While through the Host, from man to
man,
A rumour of this purpose ran,
The Standard trusting to the care
Of him who heretofore did bear
That charge, impatient Norton sought
The Chieftains to unfold his thought,
And thus abruptly spake :—"We yield
(And can it be ?) an unfought field !—
How oft has strength, the strength of
heaven,
To few triumphantly been given !
Still do our very children boast
Of mitred Thurston—what a Host
He conquered !—Saw we not the Plain
(And flying shall behold again)
Where faith was proved ?—while to
battle moved
The Standard, on the Sacred Wain
That bore it, compassed round by a bold
Fraternity of Barons old ;
And with those grey-haired champions
stood,
Under the saintly ensigns three,

¹ From the old ballad.

² From the old ballad.

The infant Heir of Mowbray's blood—
 All confident of victory !—
 Shall Percy blush, then, for his name ?
 Must Westmoreland be asked with shame
 Whose were the numbers, where the loss,
 In that other day of Neville's Cross ?
 When the Prior of Durham with holy hand
 Raised, as the Vision gave command,
 Saint Cuthbert's Relic—far and near
 Kenned on the point of a lofty spear :
 While the Monks prayed in Maiden's
 Bower

To God descending in his power.
 Less would not at our need be due,
 To us, who war against the Untrue :—
 The delegates of Heaven we rise,
 Convoked the impious to chastise :
 We, we, the sanctities of old
 Would re-establish and uphold :
 Be warned"—His zeal the Chiefs con-
 founded,

But word was given, and the trumpet
 sounded :

Back through the melancholy Host
 Went Norton, and resumed his post.
 Alas ! thought he, and have I borne
 This Banner raised with joyful pride,
 This hope of all posterity,
 By those dread symbols sanctified ;
 Thus to become at once the scorn
 Of babbling winds as they go by,
 A spot of shame to the sun's bright eye,
 To the light clouds a mockery !

—" Even these poor eight of mine would
 stem—"

Half to himself, and half to them
 He spake—" would stem, or quell, a force
 Ten times their number, man and horse ;
 This by their own unaided might,
 Without their father in their sight,
 Without the Cause for which they fight ;
 A Cause, which on a needful day
 Would breed us thousands brave as
 they."

—So speaking, he his reverend head
 Raised toward that Imagery once more :
 But the familiar prospect shed
 Despondency unfelt before :
 A shock of intimations vain,
 Dismay, and superstitious pain,
 Fell on him, with the sudden thought
 Other by whom the work was wrought :—
 Oh wherefore was her countenance bright
 With love divine and gentle light ?
 She would not, could not, disobey,
 But her Faith leaned another way.
 Ill tears she wept ; I saw them fall,
 I overheard her as she spake
 Sad words to that mute Animal,
 The White Doe, in the hawthorn brake ;
 She steeped, but not for Jesu's sake,
 This Cross in tears : by her, and One
 Unworthier far we are undone—

Her recreant Brother—he prevailed
 Over that tender Spirit—assailed
 Too oft alas ! by her whose head
 In the cold grave hath long been laid :
 She first, in reason's dawn beguiled
 Her docile, unsuspecting Child,
 Far back—far back my mind must go
 To reach the well-spring of this woe !

While thus he brooded, music sweet
 Of border tunes was played to cheer
 The footsteps of a quick retreat ;
 But Norton lingered in the rear, [He
 Stung with sharp thoughts ; and ere the
 From his distracted brain was cast,
 Before his Father Francis stood,
 And spake in firm and earnest mood.

" Though here I bend a suppliant knee
 In reverence, and unarmed, I bear
 In your indignant thoughts my share :
 Am grieved this backward march to see
 So careless and disorderly.

I scorn your Chiefs—men who would lead,
 And yet want courage at their need :
 Then look at them with open eyes !
 Deserve they further sacrifice ?—
 If—when they shrink, for ~~dare~~ oppose
 In open field, their gathering foes,
 (And fast, from this decisive day,
 Yon multitude must melt away ;)
 If now I ask a grace not claimed
 While ground was left for hope ; un-
 blamed

Be an endeavour that can do
 No injury to them or you.
 My Father ! I would help to find
 A place of shelter, till the rage
 Of cruel men do like the wind
 Exhaust itself and sink to rest ;
 Be Brother now to Brother joined !
 Admit me in the equipage
 Of your misfortunes, that at least,
 Whatever fate remain behind,
 I may bear witness in my breast
 To your nobility of mind !"

" Thou Enemy, my bane and blight !
 Oh ! bold to fight the Coward's fight
 Against all good"—but why declare,
 At length, the issue of a prayer
 Which love had prompted, yielding scope
 Too free to one bright moment's hope ?
 Suffice it that the Son, who strove
 With fruitless effort to allay
 That passion, prudently gave way ;
 Nor did he turn aside to prove
 His Brothers' wisdom or their love—
 But calmly from the spot withdrew ;
 His best endeavours to renew,
 Should ~~er~~ a kinder time ensue.

CANTO FOURTH

'Tis night : in silence looking down,
 The Moon, from cloudless ether, sees

A Camp, and a beleaguered Town,
 And Castle like a stately crown
 On the steep rocks of winding Tees ;—
 And southward far, with moor between,
 Hill-top, and flood, and forest green,
 The bright Moon sees that valley small
 Where Rylstone's old sequestered Hall
 A venerable image yields
 Of quiet to the neighbouring fields ;
 While from one pillared chimney breathes
 The smoke, and mounts in silver
 wreaths. [sleep
 —The courts are hushed :—for timely
 The grey-hounds to their kennel creep ;
 The peacock in the broad ash tree
 Aloft is roosted for the night.
 He who in proud prosperity
 Of colours manifold and bright
 Walked round, affronting the daylight ;
 And higher still, above the bowers
 Where he is perched, from yon lone Tower
 The hall-clock in the clear moonshine
 With glittering finger points at nine.

† Ah ! who could think that sadness here
 Hath any sway ? or pain, or fear ?
 A soft and mulling sound is heard
 Of streams inaudible by day ;
 The garden pool's dark surface, stirred
 By the night insects in their play,
 Break into dimples small and bright ;
 A thousand, thousand rings of light
 That shape themselves and disappear
 Almost as soon as seen :—and lo !
 Not distant far, the milk-white Doe—
 The same who quietly was feeding
 On the green herb, and nothing
 heeding.

When, Francis, uttering to the Maid
 His last words in the yew-tree shade,
 Involved whate'er by love was brought
 Out of his heart, or crossed his thought,
 Or chance presented to his eye,
 In one sad sweep of destiny—
 The same fair Creature, who hath found
 Her way into forbidden ground :
 Where now—within this spacious plot
 For pleasure made, a goodly spot,
 With lawns and beds of flowers, and
 shades
 Of trellis-work in long arcades,
 And cirque and crescent framed by wall
 Of close-clipt foliage green and tall,
 Converging walks, and fountains gay,
 And terraces in trim array—
 Beneath yon cypress spiring high,
 With pine and cedar spreading wide
 Their darksome boughs on either side,
 In open moonlight doth she lie ;
 Happy as others of her kind,
 That far from human neighbourhood,
 Range unrestricted as the wind,
 Through park, or chase, or savage wood,

But see the consecrated Maid
 Emerging from a cedar shade
 To open moonshine, where the Doe
 Beneath the cypress-spire is laid ;
 Like a patch of April snow—
 Upon a bed of herbage green,
 Lingered in a woody glade
 Or behind a rocky screen—
 Lonely relic ! which, if seen
 By the shepherd, is passed by
 With an inattentive eye.
 Nor more regard doth She bestow
 Upon the uncomplaining Doe
 Now couched at ease, though oft this
 day
 Not unperplexed nor free from pain,
 When she had tried, and tried in vain,
 Approaching in her gentle way,
 To win some look of love, or gain
 Encouragement to sport or play :
 Attempts which still the heart-sick Maid
 Rejected, or with slight repaid.

Yet Emily is soothed :—the breeze
 Came fraught with kindly sympathies.
 As she approached yon rustic Shed
 Hung with late-flowering woodbine,
 spread
 Along the walls and overhead,
 The fragrance of the breathing flowers
 Revived a memory of those hours
 When here, in this remote alcove,
 (While from the pendent woodbine came
 Like odours, sweet as if the same)
 A fondly-anxious Mother strove
 To teach her salutary fears
 And mysteries above her years.
 Yes, she is soothed : an Image faint,
 And yet not faint—a presence bright
 Returns to her—that blessed Saint
 Who with mild looks and language mild
 Instructed here her darling Child,
 While yet a prattler on the knee,
 To worship in simplicity
 The invisible God, and take for guide
 The faith reformed and purified.

'Tis flown—the Vision, and the sense,
 Of that beguiling influence ;
 " But oh ! thou Angel from above,
 Mute Spirit of maternal love,
 That stood'st before my eyes, more clear
 Than ghosts are fabled to appear
 Sent upon embassies of fear ;
 As thou thy presence hast to me
 Vouchsafed, in radiant ministry
 Descend on Francis ; nor forbear
 To greet him with a voice, and say :—
 ' If hope be a rejected stay,
 ' Do thou, my christian Son, beware
 ' Of that most lamentable snare,
 ' The self-reliance of despair ! "

Then from within the embowered
retreat

Where she had found a grateful seat
Perturbed she issues. She will go!
Herself will follow to the war,
And clasp her Father's knees;—ah, no!
She meets the insuperable bar,
The injunction by her Brother laid;
His parting charge—but ill obeyed—
That interdicted all debate,
All prayer for this cause or for that;
All efforts that would turn aside
The headstrong current of their fate:
Her duty is to stand and wait;
In resignation to abide
The shock, and finally secure
O'er pain and grief a triumph pure.
—She feels it, and her pangs are checked.
But now, as silently she paced
The turf, and thought by thought was
chased,

Came One who, with sedate respect,
Approached, and, greeting her, thus
spoke;

"An old man's privilege I take:
Dark is the time—a woeful day!
Dear daughter of affliction, say
How can I serve you? point the way."

"Rights have you, and may well be
bold:

You with my Father have grown old
In friendship—strive—for his sake go—
Turn from us all the coming woe:
This would I beg; but on my mind
A passive stillness is enjoined.
On you, if room for mortal aid
Be left, is no restriction laid;
You not forbidden to recline
With hope upon the Will divine."

"Hope," said the old Man, "must
abide

With all of us, whate'er betide.
In Craven's Wilds is many a den,
To shelter persecuted men:
Far under ground is many a cave,
Where they might lie as in the grave,
Until this storm hath ceased to rave:
Or let them cross the River Tweed,
And be at once from peril freed!"

"Ah tempt me not!" she faintly
sighed;

"I will not counsel nor exhort,
With my condition satisfied;
But you, at least, may make report
Of what befalls;—be this your task—
This may be done;—'tis all I ask!"

She spake—and from the Lady's sight
The Sire, unconscious of his age,
Departed promptly as a Page
Bound on some errand of delight.

—The noble Francis—wise as brave,
Thought he, may want not skill to save.
With hopes in tenderness concealed,
Unarmed he followed to the field;
Him will I seek: the insurgent Powers
Are now besieging Barnard's Towers,—
"Grant that the Moon which shines this
night
May guide them in a prudent flight!"

But quick the turns of chance and
change,
And knowledge has a narrow range;
Whence idle fears, and needless pain,
And wishes blind, and efforts vain.—
The Moon may shine, but cannot be
Their guide in flight—already she
Hath witnessed their captivity.
She saw the desperate assault
Upon that hostile castle made;—
But dark and dismal is the vault
Where Norton and his sons are laid!
Disastrous issue!—he had said
"This night yon faithless Towers must
yield,

Or give for ever quit the field.
—Neville is utterly dismayed,
For promise fails of Howard's aid;
And lo! ere our call replies
That he is unprepared to rise.
My heart is sick;—this weary pause
Must needs be fatal to our cause.
The breach is open—on the wall,
This night, the Banner shall be planted!
—'Twas done: his Sons were with him—
all;

They belt him round with hearts un-
And others follow;—Sire and Son
Leap down into the court;—"Tis
won!"

They shout aloud—but Heaven decreed
That with their joyful shout should close
The triumph of a desperate deed
Which struck with terror friends and foes!
The friend shrinks back—the foe recoils
From Norton and his filial band;
But they, now caught within the toils,
Against a thousand cannot stand;—
The foe from numbers courage drew,
And overpowered that gallant few.
"A rescue for the Standard!" cried
The Father from within the walls;
But, see, the sacred Standard falls!—
Confusion through the Camp spread
wide;
Some fled; and some their fears detained:
But ere the Moon had sunk to rest
In her pale chambers of the west,
Of that rash levy nought remained.

CANTO FIFTE

HIGH on a point of rugged ground
Among the wastes of Rylstone Fell

Above the loftiest ridge or mound
Where foresters or shepherds dwell,
An edifice of warlike frame
Stands single—Norton Tower its name—
It fronts all quarters, and looks round,
O'er path and road, and plain and dell,
Dark moor, and gleam of pool and stream
Upon a prospect without bound.

The summit of this bold ascent—
Though bleak and bare, and seldom free
As Pendle-hill or Penny-gent
From wind, or frost, or vapours wet—
Had often heard the sound of glee
When there the youthful Nortons' met,
To practise games and archery :
How proud and happy they ! the crowd
Of Lookers-on how pleased and proud !
And from the scorching noon-tide sky,
From showers, or when the prize was won,
They to the Tower withdrew, and there
Would mirth run round, with generous fare ;
And the stern old Lord of Rylstone hall,
Was happiest, proudest, of them all !

But now, his Child, with anguish pale,
Upon the height walks to and fro ;
'Tis well that she hath heard the tale,
Received the bitterness of woe :
For she had hoped, and hoped and feared,
Such rights did feeble nature claim :
And oft her steps had hither steered,
Though not unconscious of self-blame ;
For she her brother's charge revered,
His farewell words ; and by the same,
Yea by her brother's very name,
Had, in her solitude, been cheered.

Beside the lonely watch-tower stood
That grey-haired Man of gentle blood,
Who with her Father had grown old
In friendship ; rival hunters they,
And fellow warriors in their day ;
To Rylstone he the tidings brought ;
Then on this height the Maid had sought,
And, gently as he could, had told
The end of that dire Tragedy,
Which it had been his lot to see.

To him the Lady turned ; " You said
That Francis lives, he is not dead ? "

" Your noble brother hath been spared ;
To take his life they have not dared ;
On him and on his high endeavour
The light of praise shall shine for ever !
Now did he (such Heaven's will) in vain
His solitary course maintain ;
Not vainly struggled in the might
Of duty, seeing with clear sight ;

He was their comfort to the last,
Their joy till every pang was past.

I witnessed when to York they came—
What, Lady, if their feet were tied ;
They might deserve a good Man's blame ;
But marks of infamy and shame—
These were their triumph, these their pride ;

Nor wanted 'mid the pressing crowd
Deep feeling, that found utterance loud,
'Lo, Francis comes,' there were who cried.

'A Prisoner once, but now set free !
'Tis well, for he the worst defied
Through force of natural piety ;
He rose not in this quarrel, he,
For concord's sake and England's good,
Suit to his Brothers often made
With tears, and of his Father prayed—
And when he had in vain withstood
Their purpose—then did he divide,
He parted from them ; but at their side
Now walks in unanimity.
Then peace to cruelty and scorn,
While to the prison they are borne,
Peace, peace to all indignity !

And so in Prison were they laid—
Oh hear me, hear me, gentle Maid.
For I am come with power to bless,
By scattering gleams, through your distress,
Of a redeeming happiness.
Me did a reverent pity move
And privilege of ancient love :
And, in your service, making bold,
Entrance I gained to that strong-hold.

Your Father gave me cordial greeting ;
But to his purposes, that burned
Within him, instantly returned :
He was commanding and entreating,
And said—' We need not stop, my Son !
Thoughts press, and time is hurrying on—
And so to Francis he renewed
His words, more calmly thus pursued.

' Might this our enterprise have sped,
Change wide and deep the Land had seen.

A renovation from the dead,
A spring-tide of immortal green :
The darksome altars would have blazed
Like stars when clouds are rolled away ;
Salvation to all eyes that gazed,
Once more the Rood had been upraised
To spread its arms, and stand for aye.
Then, then—had I survived to see
New life in Bolton Priory ;
The voice restored, the eye of Truth
Re-opened that inspired my youth ;

To see her in her pomp arrayed—
This Banner (for such vow I made)
Should on the consecrated breast
Of that same Temple have found rest :
I would myself have hung it high,
Fit offering of glad victory !

A shadow of such thought remains
To cheer this sad and pensive time ;
A solemn fancy yet sustains
One feeble Being—bids me climb
Even to the last—one effort more
To attest my Faith, if not restore.

Hear then, said he, ' while I impart,
My Son, the last wish of my heart.
The Banner strive thou to regain ;
And, if the endeavour prove not vain,
Bear it—to whom if not to thee
Shall I this lonely thought consign ?—
Bear it to Bolton Priory,
And lay it on Saint Mary's shrine ;
To wither in the sun and breeze
'Mid those decaying sanctities.
There let at least the gift be laid,
The testimony there displayed ;
Bold proof that with no selfish aim,
But for lost Faith and Christ's dear name,
I helmeted a brow though white,
And took a place in all men's sight ;
Yea offered up this noble Brood,
This fair unrivalled Brotherhood,
And turned away from thee, my Son !
And left—but be the rest unsaid,
The name untouched, the tear unshed :—
My wish is known, and I have done :
Now promise, grant this one request.
This dying prayer, and be thou blest !'

Then Francis answered—' Trust thy
Son,
For, with God's will, it shall be done !'—

The pledge obtained, the solemn word
Thus scarcely given, a noise was heard,
And officers appeared in state
To lead the prisoners to their fate.
They rose, oh ! wherefore should I fear
To tell, or, Lady, you to hear ?
They rose—embraces none were given—
They stood like trees when earth and
heaven—

Are calm ; they knew each other's worth,
And reverently the Band went forth.
They met, when they had reached the
door,

One with profane and harsh intent
Placed there—that he might go before
And, with that rueful Banner borne
Aloft in sign of taunting scorn,
Conduct them to their punishment :
So cruel Sussex, unrestrained
By human feeling, had ordained.
The unhappy Banner Francis saw,
And, with a look of calm command

Inspiring universal awe,
He took it from the soldier's hand ;
And all the people that stood round
Confirmed the deed in peace profound.
—High transport did the Father shed
Upon his Son—and they were led,
Led on, and yielded up their breath ;
Together died, a happy death !—
But Francis, soon as he had braved
That insult, and the Banner saved,
Athwart the unresisting tide
Of the spectators occupied
In admiration or dismay,
Bore instantly his Charge away."

These things, which thus had in the
sight

And hearing passed of Him who stood
With Emily, on the Watch-tower height,
In Rylstone's woeful neighbourhood,
He told ; and oftentimes with voice
Of power to comfort or rejoice ;
For deepest sorrows that aspire,
Go high, go transport ever higher.
" Yes—God is rich in mercy," said
The old Man to the silent Maid,
" Yet, Lady ! shines, through this black
night,

One star of aspect heavenly bright ;
Your Brother lives—he lives—is come
Perhaps already to his home ;
Then let us leave this dreary place."
She yielded, and with gentle pace,
Though without one uplifted look,
To Kylstone-hall her way she took.

CANTO SIXTH

Why comes not Francis ?—From the
doleful City

He fled,—and, in his flight, could hear
The death-sounds of the Minster-bell :
That sullen stroke pronounced farewell
To Marinaduke, cut off from pity !
To Ambrose that ! and then a knell
For him, the sweet half-opened Flower !
For all—all dying in one hour !
—Why comes not Francis ? Thoughts
of love

Should bear him to his Sister dear
With the fleet motion of a dove ;
Yea, like a heavenly messenger
Of speediest wing, should he appear.
Why comes he not ?—for westward
fast

Along the plain of York he past ;
Reckless of what impels of leads,
Unchecked he hurries on ;—nor heeds
The sorrow, through the Villages,
Spread by triumphant cruelties
Of vengeful military force,
And punishment without remorse.
He marked not, heard not, as he fled ;
All but the suffering heart was dead

For him abandoned to blank awe,
To vacancy, and horror strong ;
And the first object which he saw,
With conscious sight, as he swept along—
It was the Banner in his hand !
He felt—and made a sudden stand.

He looked about like one betrayed :
What hath he done ? what promise
made ?

Oh weak, weak moment ! to what end
Can such a vain oblation tend,
And he the Bearer ?—Can he go
Carrying this instrument of woe,
And find, find any where, a right
To excuse him in his Country's sight ?
No ; will not all men deem the change
A downward course, perverse and
strange ?

Here is it ;—but how ? when ? [shg.
The unoffending Emily,
Again this piteous object see ?

Such conflict long did he maintain,
Nor liberty nor rest could gain :
His own life into danger brought
By this sad burden—even that thought,
Exciting self-suspicion strong
Swayed the brave man to his wrong.
And how—unless it were the sense
Of all-dissolving Providence,
Its will unquestionably shown—
How has the Banner clung so fast
To a palsied, and unconscious hand :
Clung to the hand to which it passed
Without impediment ? And why
But that Heaven's purpose might be
known

Doth now no hindrance meet his eye,
No intervention, to withstand
Fulfillment of a Father's prayer
Breathed to a Son forgiven, and blest
When all resentments were at rest.
And life in death laid the heart bare ?—
Then, like a spectre sweeping by,
Rushed through his mind the prophecy
Of utter desolation made
To Emily in the yew-tree shade :
He sighed, submitting will and power
To the stern embrace of that grasping
hour.

"No choice is left, the deed is mine—
Dead are they, dead !—and I will go,
And, for their sakes, come weal or woe,
Will lay the Relic on the shrine."

So forward with a steady will
He went, and traversed plain and hill ;
And up the vale of Wharf his way
Pursued—and, at the dawn of day,
Attained a summit whence his eyes
Could see the Tower of Bolton rise.
There Francis for a moment's space
Made halt—but hark ! a noise behind

Of horsemen at an eager pace !
He heard, and with misgiving mind.
—'Tis Sir George Bowes who leads the
Band :

They come, by cruel Sussex sent ;
Who, when the Nortons from the hand
Of death had drunk their punishment,
Bethought him, angry and ashamed,
How Francis, with the Banner claimed
As his own charge, had disappeared,
By all the standers-by revered.
His whole bold carriage (which had
quelled

Thus far the Opposer, and repelled
All censure, enterprise so bright
That even bad men had vainly striven
Against that overcoming light)
Was then reviewed, and prompt word
given,

That to what place soever fled
He should be seized, alive or dead.

The troop of horse have gained the
height
Where Francis stood in open sight.
They hem him round—"Behold the
proof,"

They cried, "the Ensign in his hand !
He did not arm, he walked aloof !
For why ?—to save his Father's land ;—
Worst Traitor of them all is he,
A Traitor dark and cowardly !"

"I am no Traitor," Francis said,
"Though this unhappy fright I bear ;
And must not part with. But beware ;—
Err not, by hasty zeal misled,
Nor do a suffering Spirit wrong,
Whose self-reproaches are too strong !"
At this he from the beaten road
Retreated towards a brake of thorn,
That like a place of vantage showed ;
And there stood bravely, though forlorn.
In self-defence with warlike brow
He stood,—nor weaponless was now ;
He from a Soldier's hand had snatched
A spear,—and, so protected, watched
The Assailants, turning round and
round ;

But from behind with treacherous
wound
A Spearman brought him to the ground.
The guardian lance, as Francis fell,
Dropped from him ; but his other hand
The Banner clenched ; till, from out
the Band,

One, the most eager for the prize,
Rushed in ; and—while, O grief to tell !
A glimmering sense still left, with eyes
Unclosed the noble Francis lay—
Seized it, as hunters seize their prey ;
But not before the warm life-blood
Had tinged more deeply, as it flowed,

The wounds the broidered Banner
showed,
Thy fatal work, O Maiden, innocent
as good !

Proudly the Horsemen bore away
The Standard ; and where Francis lay
There was he left alone, unwept,
And for two days unnoticed slept.
For at that time bewildering fear
Possessed the country, far and near ;
But, on the third day, passing by
One of the Norton Tenantry
Espied the uncovered Corse : the Man
Shrunk as he recognised the face,
And to the nearest homesteads ran
And called the people to the place.
—How desolate is Rylstone-hall !
This was the instant thought of all ;
And if the lonely Lady there
Should be ; to her they cannot bear
This weight of anguish and despair.
So, when upon sad thoughts had prest
Thoughts sadder still, they deemed it
best

That, if the Priest should yield assent
And no one hinder their intent,
Then, they, for Christian pity's sake,
In holy ground a grave would make :
And straightway buried he should be
In the Church-yard of the Priory.

Apart, some little space, was made
The grave where Francis must be laid,
In no confusion or neglect
This did they,—but in pure respect
That he was born of gentle blood ;
And that there was no neighbourhood
Of kindred for him in that ground :
So to the Church-yard they are bound,
Bearing the body on a bier ;
And psalms they sing—a holy sound
That hill and vale with sadness hear :

But Emily hath raised her head,
And is again disquieted ;
She must behold !—so many gone.
Where is the solitary One ?
And forth from Rylstone-hall stepped
she,—

To seek her Brother forth she went,
And tremblingly her course she bent
Toward Bolton's ruined Priory.
She comes, and in the vale hath heard
The funeral dirge :—she sees the knot
Of people, sees them in one spot—
And darting like a wounded bird
She reached the grave, and with her
breast

Upon the ground received the rest,—
The consummation, the whole truth
And sorrow of this final truth !

CANTO SEVENTH

" Powers there are
That touch each other to the quick—in modes
Which the gross world no sense hath to perceive,
No soul to dream of."

Thou Spirit, whose angelic hand
Was to the harp a strong command,
Called 'the submissive strings to wake
In glory for this Maiden's sake,
Say, Spirit ! whither hath she fled
To hide her poor afflicted head ?
What mighty forest in its gloom
Enfolds her ?—is a rifted tomb
Within the wildness her seat ?
Some island which the wild waves
beat—

Is that the Sufferer's last retreat ?
Or some aspiring rock, that shrouds
Its perilous front in mists and clouds ?
High-climbing rock, low sunless dale,
Sea, desert, what do these avail ?
Oh take her anguish and her fears
Into a deep recess of years !

'Tis done ;—despoil and desolation
O'er Rylstone's fair domain have blown ;
Pools, terraces, and walks are sown
With weeds ; the bowers are overthrown,
Or have given way to slow mutation,
While, in their ancient habitation
The Norton name hath been unknown.
The lordly Mansion of its pride
Is stripped ; the ravage hath spread
wide

Through park and field, a perishing
That mocks the gladness of the Spring.
And, with this silent gloom agreeing,
Appears a joyless human Being,
Of aspect such as if the waste
Were under her dominion placed.
Upon a primrose bank, her throne
Of quietness, she sits alone ;
Among the ruins of a wood,
Erewhile a covert bright and green,
And where full many a brave tree stood,
That used to spread its boughs, and
ring

With the sweet bird's carolling.
Behold her, like a virgin Queen,
Neglecting in imperial state
These outward images of fate,
And carrying inward a serene
And perfect sway, through many a
thought
Of chance and change, that hath been
brought

To the subjection of a holy,
Though stern and rigorous, melan-
choly !

The like authority, with grace
Of awfulness, is in her face,—
There hath she fixed it ; yet it seems
To be shadowed by no native right

That face, which cannot lose the gleams;
Lose utterly the tender gleams;
Of gentleness and meek delight,
And loving-kindness ever bright :
Such is her sovereign mien :—her dress
(A vest with woollen cincture tied,
A hood of mountain-wool undyed)
Is homely,—fashioned to express
A wandering Pilgrim's humbleness.

And she *hath* wandered, long and far,
Beneath the light of sun and star :
Hath roamed in trouble and in grief,
Driven forward like a withered leaf,
Yea like a ship at random blown
To distant places and unknown.
But now she dares to seek a haven
Among her native wilds of Craven :
Hath seen again her Father's room,
And put her fortitude to proof ;
The mighty sorrow hath been borne,
And she is thoroughly forlorn :
Her soul doth in itself stand fast,
Sustained by memory of the past
And strength of Reason ; held above
The infirmities of mortal love ;
Undaunted, lofty, calm, and stable,
And awfully impeneable.

And so, beneath a mouldered tree,
A self-surviving leafless oak
By unregarded age from stroke
Of ravage saved—sate Emily.
There did she rest, with head reclined,
Herself most like a stately flower,
(Such have I seen) whom chance of
birth

Hath separated from its kind,
To live and die in a shady bower,
Single on the gladsome earth.

When, with a noise like distant
thunder,

A troop of deer came sweeping by ;
And, suddenly, behold a wonder !
For One, among those rushing deer,
A single One, in mid career
Hath stopped, and fixed her large full
eye

Upon the Lady Emily ;
A Doe most beautiful, clear-white,
A radiant creature, silver-bright !

Thus checked, a little while it stayed ;
A little thoughtful pause it made ;
And then advanced with stealth-like
pace,

Drew softly near her, and more near—
Looked round—but saw no cause for
fear ;

So to her feet the Creature came,
And laid its head upon her knee,
And looked into the Lady's face,
A look of pure benignity,
And fond unclouded memory.

It is, thought Emily, the same,
The very Doe of other years !—
The pleading look the Lady viewed,
And, by her gushing thoughts subdued,
She melted into tears—
A flood of tears, that flowed apace.
Upon the happy Creature's face.

Oh, moment ever blest ! O Pair
Beloved of Heaven, Heaven's chosen
care,

This was for you a precious greeting ;
And may it prove a fruitful meeting !
Joined are they, and the sylvan Doe
Can she depart ? can she forego
The Lady, once her playful peer,
And now her sainted Mistress dear ?
And will not Emily receive
This lovely chronicler of things
Long past, delights and sorrows ?
Lone Sufferer ! will not she believe
The promise in that speaking face ;
And welcome, as a gift of grace,
The saddest thought the Creature
brings ?

That day, the first of a re-union
Which was to teem with high com-
munion,

That day of balmy April weather,
They tarried in the wood together.
And when, ere fall of evening dew,
She from her sylvan haunt withdrew,
The white Doe tracked with faithful pace
The Lady to her dwelling-place ;
That nook where, on paternal ground,
A habitation she had found,
The Master of whose humble board
Once owned her Father for his Lord ;
A hut, by tufted trees defended,
Where Rylstone brook with Wharf is
blended.

When Emily by morning light
Went forth, the Doe stood there in sight.
She shrank :—with one frail shock of
pain

Received and followed by a prayer,
She saw the Creature once again ;
Shun will she not, she feels, will bear :—
But, wheresoever she looked round,
All now was trouble-haunted ground ;
And therefore now she deems it good
Once more this restless neighbourhood
To leave.—Unwooded, yet unforbidden,
The White Doe followed up the vale,
Up to another cottage, hidden
In the deep fork of Amerdale :
And there may Emily restore
Herself, in spots unseen before.
—Why tell of mossy rock, or tree,
By lurking Dernbrook's pathless side,
Haunts of a strengthening amity
That calmed her, cheered, and fortified ?

For she hath ventured now to read
Of time, and place, and thought, and
deed—

Endless history that lies
In her silent Follower's eyes ;
Who with a power like human reason
Discerns the favourable season,
Skilled to approach or to retire,—
From looks conceiving her desire ;
From look, deportment, voice, or mien,
That vary to the heart within.
If she too passionately wreathed
Her arms, or over-deeply breathed,
Walked quick or slowly, every mood
In its degree was understood ;
Then well may their accord be true,
And kindest intercourse ensue.
—Oh ! surely 'twas a gentle rousing
When she by sudden glimpse espied
The White Doe on the mountain brows-

ing ;
Or in the meadow wandered wide !
How pleased, when down the Straggler
sank

Beside her, on some sunny bank !
How soothed, when in thick bower
enclosed,

They, like a nested pair, reposed !
Fair Vision ! when it crossed the Maid
Within some rocky cavern laid,
The dark cave's portal gliding by,
White as whitest cloud on high
Floating through the azure sky.
—What now is left for pain or fear ?
That Presence, dearer and more dear,
While they, side by side, were straying,
And the shepherd's pipe was playing,
Did now a very gladness yield
At morning to the dewy field,
And with a deeper peace endued
The hour of moonlight solitude.

With her Companion, in such frame
Of mind, to Rylstone back she came ;
And, ranging through the wasted groves,
Received the Memory of old loves,
Undisturbed and undistrest,
Into a soul which now was blest
With a soft spring-day of holy,
Mild, and grateful, melancholy :
Not sunless gloom or unenlightened,
But by tender fancies brightened,

When the bells of Rylstone played
Their sabbath music—"God us aye !"
That was the sound they seemed to speak ;
Inscriptive legend which I ween
May on those holy bells be seen,
That legend and her Grandsire's name ;
And oftentimes the Lady meek
Had in her childhood read the same ;
Words which she slighted at that day ;
But now, when such sad change was
wrought,

And of that lonely name she thought,
The bells of Rylstone seemed to say,
While she sate listening in the shade,
With vocal music, "God us aye !"
And all the hills were glad to bear
Their part in this effectual prayer.

Nor lacked she Reason's firstest
power ;
But with the White Doe at her side
Up would she climb to Norton Tower,
And thence look round her far and wide,
Her fate there measuring ;—all
stilled,—

The weak One hath subdued her heart ;
Behold the prophecy fulfilled,
Fulfilled, and she sustains her part !
But here her Brother's words have
tailed ;

Here hath a milder doom prevailed ;
That she, of him and all bereft,
Hath yet, this faithful Partner left ;
This one Associate that disproves
His words, remains for her, and loves.
If tears are shed, they do not fall
For loss of him—for one, or all ;
Yet, sometimes, sometimes doth she weep
Moved gently in her soul's soft sleep ;
A few tears down her cheek descend
For this her last and living Friend.

Bless, tender Hearts, their mutual lot,
And bless for both this savage spot ;
Which Emily doth sacred hold
For reasons dear and manifold—
Here hath she, here before her sight,
Close to the summit of this height,
The grassy rock-encircled Pound
In which the Creature first was found,
So beautiful the timid Thrall
(A spotless Youngling white as foam)
Her youngest Brother brought it home ;
The youngest, then a lusty boy,
Bore it, or led, to Rylstone-hall
With heart brimful of pride and joy !

But most to Bolton's sacred Pile,
On favouring nights, she loved to go ;
There ranged through cloister, court,
and aisle,

Attended by the soft-paced Doe ;
Nor feared she in the still moonshine
To look upon Saint Mary's shrine ;
Now on the lonely turf that showed
Where Francis slept in his last abode.
For that she came ; there oft she sate
Forlorn, but not disconsolate :
And, when she from the abyss returned
Of thought, she neither shrunk nor
mourned ;

Was happy that she lived to greet
Her mute Companion as it lay
In love and pity at her feet ;

How happy in its turn to meet
The recognition ! the mild glance
Beamed from that gracious countenance ;
Communication, like the ray
Of a new morning, to the nature
And prospects of the inferior Creature !

A mortal Song we sing, by dower
Empowered of celestial power ;
Power which the viewless Spirit shed
By whom we were first visited ; [wings
Whose voice we heard, whose hand and
Swept like a breeze the conscious strings,
When, left in solitude, erewhile
We stood before this ruined Pile,
And, quitting unsubstantial dreams,
Sang in this Presence kindred themes ;
Distress and desolation spread [dead—
Through human hearts, and pleasure
Dead—but to live again on earth—
A second and yet nobler birth ;
Dire overthrow, and yet how high
The re-ascent in sanctity !
From fair to fairer : day by day
A more divine and loftier way !
Even sacred the blessed Pilgrim trod,
By sorrow lifted towards her God ;
Uplifted to the purest sky—
Of undisturbed morality.
Her own thoughts loved she ; and could
bend

A dear look to her lowly Friend ;
There stopped ; her thirst was satisfied
With what this innocent spring supplied :
Her sanction inwardly she bore,
And stood apart from human cares ;
But to the world returned no more,
Although with no unwilling mind
Help did she give at need, and joined
The Wharfedale peasants in their prayers.
At length, thus faintly, faintly tied
To earth, she was set free, and died.
Thy soul, exalted Emily,
Maid of the blasted family,
Rose to the God from whom it came !

—In Rylstone Church her mortal frame
Was buried by her Mother's side.

Most glorious sunset ! and a ray
Survives—the twilight of this day—
In that fair Creature whom the fields
Support, and whom the forest shields ;
Who, having filled a holy place,
Partakes, in her degree, Heaven's grace ;
And hears a memory and a mind
Raised far above the law of kind ;
Haunting the spots with lonely cheer
Which her dear Mistress once held dear :
Loves most what Emily loved most—
The enclosure of this church-yard
ground ;

Here wanders like a gliding ghost,
And every sabbath here is found ;
Comes with the people when the bells
Are heard among the moorland dells,
Finds entrance through yon arch, where
way
Lies open on the sabbath-day ;
Here walks amid the mournful waste
Of prostrate altars, shrines defaced,
And floors encumbered with rich show
Of fret-work imagery laid low,
Paces softly, or makes halt,
By fractured cell, or tomb, or vault ;
By plate of monumental brass
Dim-gleaming among weeds and grass,
And sculptured Forms of Warriors brave :
But chiefly by that single grave,
That one sequestered hillock green,
The pensive visitant is seen.
There doth the gentle Creature lie
With those adversities unmoved ;
Calm spectacle, by earth and sky
In their benignity approved !
And aye, methinks, this hoary Pile,
Subdued by outrage and decay,
Looks down upon her with a smile,
A gracious smile, that seems to say—
"Thou, thou art not a Child of Time,
But Daughter of the Eternal Prime !"

ECCLESIASTICAL SONNETS

IN SERIES

PART I

FROM THE INTRODUCTION OF CHRISTIANITY INTO BRITAIN, TO THE CONSUMMATION OF THE PAPAL DOMINION

"A verse may catch a wandering Soul, that flies
Profounder Tracts and by a blest surprise
Convert delight into Sacrifice."

I

INTRODUCTION

I, who accompanied with faithful pace
Cerulean Dudden from his cloud-fed
spring,
And loved with spirit ruled by his to sing
Of mountain-quiet and boon nature's
grace.

I, who essayed the nobler Stream to trace
Of Liberty, and smote the plausible
string
Till the checked torrent, proudly triumph-
ing,
Won for herself a lasting resting-place ;
Now seek upon the heights of Time the
source

Of a HOLY RIVER, on whose banks are
found.
Sweet pastoral flowers, and laurels that
have crowned
Full oft the unworthy brow of lawless
force;
And, for delight of him who tracks its
course,
Immortal amaranth and palms abound.

II

CONJECTURES

If there be prophets on whose spirit rest
Past things, revealed like future, they
can tell
What Powers, presiding o'er the sacred
well
Of Christian Faith, this savage Island
blessed
With its first bounty. Wandering through
the west,
Did holy Paul¹ a while in Britain dwell,
And call the Fountain forth by miracle,
And with dread signs the nascent Stream
invest?
Or He, whose bonds dropped off, whose
prison doors
Flew open, by an Angel's voice un-
barred?
Or some of humbler name, to these wild
shores
Storm-driven; who, having seen the
cup of woe
Pass from their Master, sojourned here
to guard
The precious Current they had taught to
flow?

III

TREPIDATION OF THE DRUIDS

SCREAMS round the Arch-druid's brow
the scamew²—white
As Menai's foam: and toward the
mystic ring
Where Augurs stand, the Future ques-
tioning,
Slowly the cormorant aims her heavy
flight,
Portending ruin to each baleful rite,
That, in the lapse of ages, hath crept o'er
Diluvian truths, and patriarchal lore.
Haughty the Bard: can these meek doc-
trines blight
His transports? wither his heroic
strains?
But all shall be fulfilled;—the Julian
spear

¹ See Note.

² This water-fowl was, among the Druids, an emblem of those traditions connected with the deluge that made an important part of their mysteries. The Cormorant was a bird of pad

A way first opened; and, with Roman
chains.
The tidings come of Jesus crucified;
They come—they spread—the weak,
the suffering, hear:
Receive the faith, and in the hope abide.

IV

DRUIDICAL EXCOMMUNICATION

MERCY and Love have met thee on thy
road,
Thou wretched Outcast, from the gift
of fire
And food cut off by sacerdotal ire,
From every sympathy that Man be-
stowed!
Yet shall it claim our reverence, that to
God,
Ancient of days! that to the eternal Sire,
These jealous Ministers of law aspire,
As to the one sole fount whence wisdom
flowed,
Justice, and order. Tremblingly escaped,
As if with prescience of the coming storm,
That intimation when the stars were
shaped:
And still, mid yon thick woods, the pri-
mal¹ tree
Glimmers through many a superstitious
form
That fills the Soul with unavailing ruth.

V

UNCERTAINTY

DARKNESS surrounds us; seeking, we
are lost
On Snowdon's wilds, amid Brigantian
coves,
Or where the solitary shepherd roves
Along the plain of Sarum, by the ghost
Of Time and shadows of Tradition,
crost;
And where the boatman of the Western
Isles
Slackens his course—to mark those holy
piles
Which yet survive on bleak Iona's
coast.
Nor these, nor monuments of eldest name,
Nor Taliesin's unforgotten lays,
Nor characters of Greek or Roman
fame,
To an unquestionable Source have led;
Enough—if eyes, that sought the foun-
tain-head
In vain, upon the growing Rill may gaze.

VI

PERSECUTION

LAMENT! for Diocletian's fiery sword
Works busy as the lightning; but
instinct

With malice ne'er to deadliest weapon
linked,
Which God's ethereal store-houses
afford :
Against the Followers of the incarnate
Lord.
It rages ;—some are smitten in the field—
Some pierced to the heart through the
ineffectual shield
Of sacred home ;—with pomp are others
gored.
And dreadful respite. Thus was Alban
tried,
England's first Martyr, whom no threats
could shake :
Self-offered victim, for his friend he died,
And for the faith ; nor shall his name for-
sake
That Hill, whose flowery platform seems
to rise
By Nature decked for holiest sacrifice.¹

VII

RECOVERY

As, when a storm hath ceased, the birds
regain
Their cheerfulness, and busy trim
Their nests, or chant a gratulating
hymn
To the blue ether and bespangled plain :
Even so, in many a re-constructed fane,
Have the survivors of this Storm re-
newed
Their holy rites with vocal gratitude :
And solemn ceremonials they ordain
To celebrate their great deliverance :
Most feelingly instructed 'mid their
fear—
That persecution, blind with rage ex-
treme,
May not the less, through Heaven's mild
countenance,
Even in her own despite, both feed and
cheer :
For all things are less dreadful than they
seem.

VIII

TEMPTATIONS FROM ROMAN REFINEMENTS

Watch, and be firm ! for, soul-subduing
vice,
Heart-killing luxury, on your steps awaits
Fair houses, baths, and banquets de-
licate,
And temples flashing, bright as polar ice,
Their radiance, through the woods—
may yet suffice
To sap your hardy virtue, and abate
Your love of Him upon whose forehead
sate

Note.

The crown of thorns ; whose life-blood
flowed, the price
Of your redemption. Shun the insidious
arts
That Rome provides, less dreading from
her frown
Than from her wily praise, her peaceful
gown,
Language, and letters ;—these, though
fondly viewed
As humanising graces, are but parts
And instruments of deadliest servitude !

IX

DISSENSIONS

That heresies should strike (if truth be
scanned
Presumptuously) their roots both wide
and deep,
Is natural as dreams to feverish sleep.
Lo ! Discord at the altar dares to stand
Uplifting toward high Heaven her fiery
brand,
A cherished Priestess of the new-bap-
tized !
But chastisement shall follow peace
despised.
The Pictish cloud darkens the enervate
land
By Rome abandoned ; vain are suppliant
cries,
And prayers that would undo her forced
farewell :
For she returns not.—Awed by her own
knell,
She casts the Britons upon strange Allies,
Soon to become more dreaded enemies
Than heartless misery called them to
repel.

X

STRUGGLE OF THE BRITONS AGAINST THE
BARBARIANS

Rise !—they have risen : of brave
Aneurin ask
How they have scourged old foes, per-
fidious friends :
The Spirit of Caractacus descends
Upon the Patriots, animates their
task :—
Amazement runs before the towering
casque
Of Arthur, bearing through the stormy
field
The virgin sculptured on his Christian
shield :—
Stretched in the sunny light of victory
bask
The Host that followed Urien as he
strode

O'er heaps of slain ;—from Cambrian
wood and moss
Druids descend, auxiliars of the Cross ;
Bards, nursed on blue Plinlimmon's
still abode,
Rush on the fight, to harps preferring
swords,
And everlasting deeds to burning words !

XI

SAXON CONQUEST

Nor wants the cause the panic-striking
aid
Of hallelujahs ¹ tost from hill to hill—
For instant victory. But Heaven's high
will
Permits a second and a darker shade
Of Pagan night. Afflicted and dismayed,
The Relics of the Sword flee to the moun-
tains :
O wretched Land ! whose tears have
flowed like fountains ;
Whose arts and honours in the dust are
laid
By men yet scarcely conscious of a care
For other monuments than those of
Earth ;
Who, as the fields and woods have given
them birth,
Will build their savage fortunes only
there ;
Content, if foss, and barrow, and the
Of long-drawn rampart, witness what
they were.

XII

MONASTERY OF OLD BANGOR ²

*THE oppression of the tumult—wrath and
scorn—
The tribulation—and the gleaming
blades—
Such is the impetuous spirit that per-
The song of Taliesin :—Ours shall
mourn
The unarmed Host who by their prayers
would turn
The sword from Bangor's walls, and guard
the store
Of Aboriginal and Roman lore,
And Christian monuments, that now
must burn
To senseless ashes. Mark ! how all
things swerve
From their known course, or vanish like a
dream ;
Another language spreads from coast to
coast ;
Only perchance some melancholy Stream
And some indignant Hills old names
preserve,
When laws, and creeds, and people all
are lost !*

¹ See Note. ² See Note.

XIII

CASUAL INCIDENT

A BRIGHT-HAIRED company of youthful
slaves,
Beautiful strangers, stand within the pale
Of a sad market, ranged for public sale,
Where Tiber's stream the Immortal City
laves :
ANGLI by name ; and not an ANGEL
waves
His wing who could seem lovelier to
man's eye
Than they appear to holy Gregory ;
Who, having learnt that name, salvation
craves
For Them, and for their Land. The
earnest Sire,
His questions urging, feels, in slender
ties
Of chiming sound, commanding sym-
pathies ;
DE-TRIANS—he would save them from
God's FIRE :
Subjects of Saxon AELLA—they shall
sing
Glad HALLELUIJAHs to the eternal King !

XIV

GLAD TIDINGS

For ever hallowed be this morning
fair,
Blest be the unconscious shore on which
ye tread,
And blest the silver Cross, which ye,
instead
Of martial banner, in procession bear ;
The Cross preceding Him who floats in
air,
The pictured Saviour !—By Augustin
led,
They come—and onward travel with-
out dread,
Chanting in barbarous ears a tuneful
prayer—
Sung for themselves, and those whom
they would free !
Rich conquest waits them :—the tem-
pestuous sea
Of Ignorance, that ran so rough and high
And heeded not the voice of clashing
swords,
These good men humble by a few bart
words,
And calm with fear of God's divinity.

XV

PAULINUS ³

BUT, to remote Northumbria's royal
Hall,
Where thoughtful Edwin, tutored in
the school

³ See Note.

Of sorrow still maintains a heathen rule,
 Who comes with functions apostolical?
 Mark him, of shoulders curved, and stature tall,
 Black hair, and vivid eye, and meagre cheek,
 A prominent feature like an eagle's beak:
 A man whose aspect doth at once appal
 And strike with reverence, The Monarch leans
 Toward the pure truths this Delegate propounds,
 Repeatedly his own deep mind he sounds
 With careful hesitation,—then convenes
 A synod of his Councillors:—give ear.
 And what a pensive Sage doth utter, hear!

XVI
 PERSUASION

"MAN's life is like a Sparrow, mighty King!
 That while a banquet with your Chiefs you sit
 Housed near a blazing fire—is seen to flit
 Safe from the wintry tempest. Fluttering,
 Here did it enter; there, on hasty wing.
 Flies out, and passes on from cold to cold;
 But whence it came we know not, nor behold
 Whither it goes. Even such, that transient Thing,
 The human Soul; not utterly unknown
 While in the Body lodged, her warm abode;
 But from what world She came, what woe or weal
 On her departure waits, no tongue hath shown:
 This mystery if the Stranger can reveal,
 His be a welcome cordially bestowed!"¹

XVII
 CONVERSION

PROMPT transformation works the novel Lore;
 The Council closed, the Priest in full career
 Rides forth, an armed man, and hurls a spear
 To desecrate the Fane which heretofore
 He served in folly. Woden falls, and heaven
 Is overturned; the mace, in battle

¹ See Note.

(So might they dream) till victory was achieved,
 Drops, and the God himself is seen no more.
 Temple and Altar sink, to hide their shame
 Amid oblivious weeds. "O come to me,
 Ye heavy laden!" such the inviting voice
 Heard near fresh streams;² and thousands, who rejoice
 In the new Rite—the pledge of sanctity,
 Shall, by regenerate life, the promise claim.

XVIII
 APOLOGY

NOR scorn the aid which Fancy oft doth lend
 The soul's eternal interests to promote:
 Death, darkness, danger, are our natural lot;
 And evil Spirits may our walk attend
 For aught the wisest know or comprehend;
 Then be good Spirits free to breathe a note
 Of elevation: let their odours float
 Around these Converts: and their glories blend,
 The midnight stars outshining, or the blaze
 Of the noon-day. Nor doubt that golden cords
 Of good works, mingling with the visions, raise
 The Soul to purer worlds: and who the line
 Shall draw, the limits of the power define.
 That even imperfect faith to man affords?

XIX
 PRIMITIVE SAXON CLERGY³

How beautiful your presence, how benign,
 Servants of God! who not a thought will share
 With the vain world; who, outwardly as bare
 As winter trees, yield no fallacious sign
 That the firm soul is clothed with fruit divine!
 Such Priest, when service worthy of his care
 Has called him forth to breathe the common air,
 Might seem a saintly Image from its shrine
 Descended:—happy are the eyes that meet
 The Apparition; evil thoughts are

² See Note.

³ See Note.

At his approach, and low-bowed necks
entreat
A benediction from his voice or hand ;
Whence grace, through which the heart
can understand,
And vows, that bind the will, in silence
made.

XX

OTHER INFLUENCES

When the Body, round which in
love we clung,
Is chilled by death, does mutual ser-
vice fail ?
Is tender pity then of no avail ?
Are intercessions of the fervent tongue
A waste of hope ?—From this sad
source have sprung
Rites that console the Spirit, under
grief [relief :
Which ill can brook more rational
Hence, prayers are shaped amiss, and
dirges sung
For Souls, whose doom is fixed ! The
way is smooth
For Power that travels with the human
heart :
Confession ministers the pang to soothe
in him who at the ghost of guilt doth
start.
Ye holy Men, so earnest in your care,
Of your own mighty instruments be-
ware !

XXI

SECLUSION

LANCE, shield, and sword relinquished—
at his side
A bead-roll, in his hand a clasped book.
Or staff more harmless than a shepherd's
crook,
The war-worn Chieftain quits the world
—to hide [abide
His thin autumnal locks where Monks
in cloistered privacy. But not to dwell
In soft repose he comes. Within his cell,
Round the decaying trunk of human
pride, [silent hour,
At morn, and eve, and midnight's
Do penitential cogitations cling ;
Like ivy, round some ancient elm, they
twine
In grisly folds and strictures serpentine ;
Yet, while they strangle, a fair growth
they bring,
For recompence—their own perennial
bower.

XXII

CONTINUED

METHINKS that to some vacant hermi-
tage
My feet would rather turn—to some
dry nook

Scooped out of living rock, and near
a brook
Hurled down a mountain-cove from
stage to stage,
Yet tempering, for my sight, its bustling
rage
In the soft heaven of a translucent
pool ;
Thence creeping under sylvan arches
cool,
Fit haunt of shapes whose glorious
equipage
Would elevate my dreams. A beechen
bowl,
A maple dish, my furniture should be ;
Crisp, yellow leaves my bed ; the
hooting owl
My night-watch : nor should e'er the
crested fowl
Front thorp or vill his matins sound
for me,
Tired of the world and all its industry.

XXIII

REFRUG

But what if One, through grove or
flowery mead,
Indulging thus at with the creeping feet
Of a voluptuous indolence, should meet
Thy hovering Shade, O Venerable
Bede !
The saint, the scholar, from a circle
freed
Of toil stupendous, in a hallowed seat
Of learning, where thou heard'st the
billows beat
On a wild coast, rough monitors to
feed
Perpetual industry. Sublime Recluse !
The recreant soul, that dares to shun
the debt
Imposed on human kind, must first
forget
Thy diligence, thy unrelaxing use
Of a long life ; and, in the hour of
death,
The last dear service of thy passing
breath !

XXIV

SAXON MONASTERIES, AND LIGHTS AND
SHADES OF THE RELIGION

By such examples moved to unbought
pains,
The people work like congregated bees ;
Eager to build the quiet Fortresses
Where Piety, as they believe, obtains
From Heaven a general blessing ;
timely rains
Or needful sunshine ; prosperous enter-
prise,
He expired dictating the last words of a
translation of St. John's Gospel.

Justice and peace:—bold faith! yet
 also rise [gains.
 The sacred Structures for less doubtful
 The Sensual, think with reverence of
 the palms
 Which this chaste Votaries seek, beyond
 the grave;
 If penance be redeemable, thence alms
 To the poor, and freedom to the
 slave;
 And if full oft the Sanctuary save
 Lives black with guilt, ferocity it calms.

XXV

MISSIONS AND TRAVELS

Nor sedentary all: there are who
 roam
 To scatter seeds of life on barbarous
 shores;
 Or quit with zealous step their knee-
 worn floors [dom:
 To seek the general mart of Christen-
 Whence they, like richly-laden mer-
 chants, come [say
 To their beloved cells:—or shall we
 That, like the Red-cross Knight, they
 urge their way,

To lead in memorable triumph home
 Truth, their immortal Una? Babylon,
 Learned and wise, hath perished utterly,
 Nor leaves her Speech one word to aid
 the sigh

That would lament her;—Memphis,
 Tyre, are gone
 With all their Arts,—but classic lore
 glides on
 By these Religious saved for all pos-
 terity.

XXVI

ALFRED

BEHOLD a pupil of the monkish gown,
 The pious ALFRED, King to Justice
 dear!

Lord of the harp and liberating spear:
 Mirror of Princes! Indigent Renown
 Might range the starry ether for a
 crown

Equal to his deserts, who, like the year,
 Pours forth his bounty, like the day
 doth cheer,

And awes like night with mercy-tem-
 pered frown.

Rise from this noble miser of his time
 No moment steals: pain narrows not
 his cares.

Though small his kingdom as a spark
 or gem,

Of Alfred boasts remote Jerusalem,
 And Christian India, through her wide-
 spread clime,

In sacred converse gifts with Alfred
 shares.

¹ See Note.

XXVII

HIS DESCENDANTS

WHEN thy great soul was freed from
 mortal chains,

Darling of England! many a bitter
 shower

Fell on thy tomb: but emulative power
 Flowed in thy line through undegenerate
 veins.

The Race of Alfred covet glorious pains
 When dangers threaten, dangers ever
 new!

Black tempests bursting, blacker still
 in view!

But mainly sovereignty its hold retains;
 The root sincere, the branches bold to
 strive

With the fierce tempest, while, within
 the round

Of their protection, gentle virtues
 thrive;

As oft, mid some green plot of open
 ground,

Wide as the oak extends its dewy gloom.
 The fostered hyacinths spread their
 purple bloom.

XXVIII

INFLUENCE ABUSED

URGED by Ambition, who with subtlest
 skill

Changes her means, the Enthusiast
 as a dupe

Shall soar, and as a hypocrite can stoop,
 And turn the instruments of good to ill,

Moulding the credulous people to his
 will.

Such DUNSTAN:—from its Benedictine
 coop

Issues the master Mind, at whose fell
 swoop

The chaste affections tremble to fulfil
 Their purposes. Behold, pre-signified,

The Might of spiritual sway! his
 thoughts, his dreams,

Do in the supernatural world abide:
 So vaunt a throng of Followers, filled
 with pride

In what they see of virtues pushed to
 extremes,

And sorceries of talent misapplied.

XXIX

DANISH CONQUESTS

Woe to the Crown that doth the Cowl
 obey!²

Dissension, checking arms that would
 restrain

The incessant Rovers of the northern
 main,

² See Note.

Helps to restore and spread a Pagan
 sway.
 But Gospel truth is potent to allay
 Fierceness and rage, and soon the
 cruel Dane
 Feels, through the influence of her
 gentle reign,
 His native superstitions melt away
 Thus, often, when thick gloom the east
 o'ershrouds,
 The full orb'd Moon, slow climbing,
 doth appear
 Silently to consume the heavy clouds,
 How no one can resolve but every eye
 Around her sees, while air is hushed
 a clear
 And widening circuit of ethereal sky

XXX
 CANTE

A PLEASANT music floats along the
 Mere,
 From Monks in Lily chanting service
 high
 While—as Canute the King is rowing by
 ' My Oarsmen quoth the mighty
 King, ' draw near,
 "That we this sweet song of the Monks
 may hear"
 He listens (all past conquests and all
 schemes
 Of future vanishing like empty dreams)
 Heart-touched, and haply met with ut
 a tear
 ' The Royal Mastrail ere the chit is
 still,
 While his free Barge skims the smooth
 flood along,
 Gives to that rapture an accordant
 Rhyme
 O suffering Earth 'be thankful, sternest
 clime
 And rudest age are subject to the
 thrill
 Of heaven descend'd Piety and Son

XXXI

THE NORMAN CONQUIST

THE woman hearted Confessor prepares
 The evanescence of the Saxon line
 Hark! 'tis the tolling Curfew!—the
 stars shine,
 But of the lights that cherish household
 cares
 And festive gladness, burns not one that
 dares
 To twinkle after that dull stroke of
 thine,
 Emblem and instrument, from Thames
 to line.
 Of force that daunts, and cunning that
 ensnares!

¹ Which is still extant.

Yet as the terrors of the lordly bell,
 That quench, from hut to palace, lamps
 and fires,
 Touch not the tapers of the sacred
 quires,
 Even so a thralldom, studious to expel
 Old laws, and ancient customs to de-
 range,
 To Creed or Ritual brings no fatal
 change

XXXII

COLDLY we spake The Saxons, over-
 powered
 By wrong triumphant through its own
 excess,
 From fields laid waste, from house, and
 home devoured
 By flames, look up to heaven and crave
 redress
 From God's eternal justice Pitiless
 Though men be, there are angels that
 can feel
 For wounds that death alone has power
 to heal,
 For penitent guilt, and innocent dis-
 tress
 And hark! a champion risen in arms to
 try
 His Countess's virtue, flight, and
 breathes no more
 Him in their hearts the people canon-
 ize,
 And far above the mine's most precious
 ore
 The least small pittance of bare mould
 they prize
 Scooped from the sacred earth where
 his dear relics lie

XXXIII

THE COUNCIL OF CLERMONT

"AND shall," the Pontiff asks, "pro-
 ficiency flow
 ' From Nazareth—source of Christian
 piety,
 ' From Bethlehem, from the Mounts
 of Agony
 ' And glorified Ascension? Warriors, go,
 "With prayers and blessings we your
 path will sow,
 "Like Moses hold our hands erect,
 till ye
 ' Have chased far off, by righteous
 victory
 ' These sons of Amalek, or laid them
 low!"
 "GOD WILLETH IT," the whole assembly
 cry,
 Shout which the enraptured multitude
 astounds!
 The Council-roof and Clermont's towers
 reply

"God willeth it," from hill to hill re-
bounds,
And, in awestricken Countries far and
nigh,
Through "Nature's hollow arch" that
voice resounds.¹

XXXIV

CRUSADES

The turbaned Race are poured in thick-
ening swarms
Along the west; though driven from
Aquitaine,
The Crescent glitters on the towers of
Spain;
And soft Italia feels renewed alarms;
The scimitar, that yields not to the
charms
Of ease, the narrow Bosphorus will
disdain;
Nor long (that crossed) would Grecian
Mys detain
Their tents, and check the current of
their arms.
Then blasphe not those who, by the
mightiest lever
Known to the moral world, Imagination,
Upheave, so seems it, from her natural
station
All Christendom:—they sweep along
(was never
So huge a host!)—to tear from the
Unbeliever
The precious Tomb, their haven of
salvation.

XXXV

RICHARD I

REDOUTED King, of courage leonine,
I mark thee, Richard! urgent to equip
Thy warlike person with the staff and
scep:
I watch thee sailing o'er the midland
brine;
In conquered Cyprus see thy Bride
decline
Her blushing cheek, love-vows upon
her lip,
And see love-emblems streaming from
thy ship,
As thence she holds her way to Palestine
My Song, a fearless homager, would
attend
Thy thundering battle-axe as it cleaves
the press
Of war; but duty summons her away
To tell—how, finding in the rash dis-
tress [friend,
Of those Enthusiasts a subservient
To giddier heights hath clomb the
Papal sway.

¹ The decision of this council was believed
to be instantly known in remote parts of Europe.

XXXVI

AN INTERDICT

REALMS quake by turns: proud Arbi-
tress of grace,
The Church, by mandate shadowing
forth the power
She arrogates o'er heaven's eternal
door,
Closes the gates of every sacred place.
Straight from the sun and tainted
air's embrace
All sacred things are covered: cheerful
morn
Grows sad as night—no seemly garb
is worn.
Nor is a face allowed to meet a face
With natural smiles of greeting. Bells
are dumb:
Ditches are graves—funereal rites de-
nied:
And in the church-yard he must take
his bride
Who dares be wedded! Fancies thickly
come
Into the pensive heart ill fortified,
And comfortless despairs the soul be-
numb.

XXXVII

PAPAL ABUSES

As with the Stream our voyage we
pursue,
The gross materials of this world present
A marvellous study of wild accident;
Uncouth proximities of old and new;
And bold transfigurations, more untrue
(As might be deemed) to disciplined
intent
Than aught the sky's fantastic element,
When most fantastic, offers to the view.
Saw we not Henry scourged at Becket's
shrine?
Lo! John self-stripped of his insignia:—
crown,
Sceptre and mantle, sword and ring,
laid down
At a proud Legate's feet! The spears
that line
Baronial halls, the opprobrious insult
feel;
And angry Ocean roars a vain appeal.

XXXVIII

SCENE IN VENICE

BLACK Demons hovering o'er his mitred
head.
To Caesar's Successor the Pontiff spake;
"Ere I absolve thee, stoop! that on
thy neck
"Levelled with earth this foot of
mine may tread."
Then he, who to the altar had been led,

He, whose strong arm the Orient could
not check,
He, who had held the Soldan at his beck,
Stooped, of all glory disinherited,
And even the common dignity of man!—
Amazement strikes the crowd: while
many turn
Their eyes away in sorrow, others burn
With scorn, invoking a vindictive ban
From outraged Nature; but the sense
of most
in abject sympathy with power is lost.

XXXIX

PAPAL DOMINION

UNLESS to Peter's Chair the viewless
wind
Must come and ask permission when to
blow,
What further empire would it have?
for now
A ghostly Domination, unconfined
As that by dreaming Bards to Love
assigned,
Sits there in sober truth—to raise the
low,
Perplex the wise, the strong to over-
throw;
Through earth and heaven to bind and
to unbind!—
Resist—the thunder quails thee!—
trough—rebuff
Shall be thy recompence! from land to
land
The ancient thrones of Christendom are
stuffed
For occupation of a magic wand,
And 'tis the Pope that wields it:—
whether rough
Or smooth his front, our world is in
his hand!

PART II

TO THE CLOSE OF THE TROUBLES IN
THE REIGN OF CHARLES I

I

How soon—alas! did Man, created
pure—
By Angels guarded, deviate from the
line
Prescribed to duty:—woeful forfeiture
He made by wilful breach of law divine.
With like perverseness did the Church
abjure
Obedience to her Lord, and haste to
twine,
'Mid Heaven-born flowers that shall for
aye endure.
Weeds, on whose front the world had
fixed her sign.
O Man,—if with thy trials thus it
fare,

If good can smooth the way to evil
choice,
From all rash censure be the mind kept
free;
He only judges right who weighs, com-
pares, [voice
And, in the sternest sentence which his
Pronounces, ne'er abandons Charity.

II

From false assumption rose, and fondly
hail'd
By superstition, spread the Papal power.
Yet do not deem the Autocracy prevail'd
Thus only, even in error's darkest hour.
She daunts, forth-thundering from her
spiritual tower [tames.
Brute rapine, or with gentle lure she
justice and Peace through Her uphold
their claims;
And Chastity finds many a sheltering
bower.
Realm there is none that if confound'd
or sway'd
By her commands partakes not, in degree,
Of good, o'er manners' arts and arms,
diffused;
Yes, to the domination, Roman See,
Tho' miserably, oft monstrously, abused
By blind ambition, be this tribute paid.

III

CISTERCIAN MONASTERY

"HERE Man more purely lives, less oft
doth fall,
"More promptly rises, walks with
stricter heed,
"More safely rests, dies happier, is
freed
"Earlier from cleansing fires, and gains
withal
"A brighter crown."—On yon Cistercian
wall
That confident assurance may be read:
And, to like shelter, from the world have
fled
Increasing multitudes. The potent call
Doubtless shall cheat full oft the heart's
desires;
Yet, while the rugged Age on pliant
knee
Vows to rapt Fancy humble fealty,
A gentler life spreads round the holy
spires;
Where'er they rise, the sylvan waste
retires,
And airy harvests crown the fertile
lea.

IV

DEPLORABLE his lot who tills the ground,
His whole life long tills it, with heart-
less toil

1 See Note.

Of villain-service, passing with the soil
To each new Master, like a steer or
hound,
Or like a rotted tree, or stone carth-
bound ;
But mark how gladly, through their own
domains,
The Monks relax or break these iron
chains ;
While Mercy, uttering, through their
voice, a sound
Echoed in Heaven, cries out, " Ye
Chiefs, abate
These legalized oppressions ! Man—
whose name
And nature God disdained not ; Man—
whose soul
Christ died for—cannot forfeit his high
claim
To live and move exempt from all
controul
Which fellow-feeling doth not mitigate ! "

V

MONKS AND SCHOOLMEN

RECORD we too, with just and faithful
pen,
That many hooded Cenobites here are,
Who in their private cells have yet a
care
Of public quiet ; unambitious Men,
Counsellors for the world, of piercing
ken ;
Whose fervent exhortations from afar
Move Princes to their duty, peace or
war ;
And oft-times in the most forbidding
den
Of solitude, with love of science strong,
How patiently the yoke of thought they
bear !
How subtly glide its finest threads
along !
Spirits that crowd the intellectual
sphere
With many boundaries, as the astrono-
mer
With orb and cycle girds the starry
throne.

VI

OTHER BENEFITS

AND, not in vain embodied to the sight,
Religion finds even in the stern retreat
Of feudal sway her own appropriate
seat ;
From the collegiate pomps on Windsor's
Down to the humbler altar, which the
Knight
And his Retainers of the embattled hall
Seek in domestic oratory small.
For prayer in stillness, or the chanted
rite.

Then chiefly dear, when foes are planted
round,
Who teach the intrepid guardians of the
place—
Hourly exposed to death, with famine
worn,
And suffering under many a perilous
wound—
How sad would be their durance, if
forlorn
Of offices dispensing heavenly grace !

VII

CONTINUED

AND what melodious sounds at times
prevail !
And, ever and anon, how bright a gleam
Pours on the surface of the turbid
Stream !
What heartfelt fragrance mingles with
the gale [sail !
That swells the bosom of our passing
For where, but on this River's margin,
blow
Those flowers of chivalry, to bind the
brow
Of hardihood with wreaths that shall not
fail ?— [world !
Fair Court of Edward ! wonder of the
I see a matchless blazonry unfurled
Of wisdom, magnanimity, and love ;
And meekness tempering honourable
pride ;
The lamb is couching by the lion's side,
And near the flame-eyed eagle sits the
dove.

VIII

CRUSADERS

FURL we the sails, and pass with tardy
oars
Through these bright regions, casting
many a glance
Upon the dream-like issues—the romance
Of many-coloured life that Fortune
pours
Round the Crusaders, till on distant
shores
Their labours end : or they return to lie,
The vow performed, in cross-legged effigy,
Devoutly stretched upon their chance
floors.
Am I deceived ? Or is their requiem
chanted
By voices never mute when Heaven
unties
Her inmost, softest, tenderest harmonies ;
Requiem which Earth takes up With
voice undaunted,
When she would tell how Brave, and
Good, and Wise,
For their high guerdon not in vain have
panted !

IX

As faith thus sanctified the warriors
 crest
 While from the Papal Unity there came,
 What feeble meaps had fail'd to give,
 one aim
 Diffused thro' all the regions of the
 West,
 So does her Unity its power attest
 By works of Art, that shed on the out-
 ward frame
 Of worship, glory and grace which who
 shall blame
 That ever looked to heaven for final
 rest?
 Had countless Temples that so well
 befit
 Your ministry that as we rise and
 take
 Form spirit and character from holy
 writ,
 Give to devotion wheresoe'er awake
 Pinions of high and higher sweep and
 make
 The unconverted soul with awe submit

X

WHERE long and deeply hath been fixed
 the root
 In the blest soil of gospel truth the
 Tree,
 (Blighted or scathed tho' many branches
 be,
 Put forth to wither many a hopeful
 shoot)
 Can never cease to bear celestial fruit
 Witness the Church that oft times, with
 effect
 Dear to the saints strives earnestly to
 eject
 Her bane her vital energies recruit
 Lamenting do n't hopelessly repine
 When such good work is doomed to be
 undone
 The conquests lost that were so hardily
 won —
 All promises, vouchsafed by Heaven will
 shine
 In light confirmed while years their
 course shall run
 Confirmed alike in progress and decline

XI

TRANSUBSTANTIATION

ENOUGH for see, with dim association
 The tapers burn, the odorous incense
 feeds
 A greedy flame the pompous mass
 proceeds,
 The Priest bestows the appointed
 consecration
 And, while the Host is raised, its ele-
 vation

Ap awe and supernatural horror breeds,
 And all the people bow their heads, like
 reeds
 To a soft breeze, in lowly adoration
 This Valdo brooks not. On the banks
 of Rhone
 He taught, till persecution chased him
 thence,
 To adore the Invisible, and Him alone
 Nor are his Followers loth to seek defence,
 Mid woods and wilds, on Nature's craggy
 throne,
 From rites that trample upon soul and
 sense

XII

THE SAUDOIS

But whence came they who for the
 Saviour Lord
 Have long borne witness as the Scrip-
 tures teach? —
 Ages ere Valdo raised his voice to preach
 In Gallic ears the unadulterate Word,
 Their fugitive Progenitors explored
 Sublime vales in quest of safe re-
 treats
 Where that pure Church survives though
 summer heats
 Open a passage to the Romish sword
 Far as it dares to follow Herbs self-
 sown,
 And fruitage gathered from the chestnut
 wood,
 Nourish the sufferers then, and mists,
 that brood
 O'er chasms with new fallen obstacles
 bestrown
 Protect them, and the eternal snow
 that daunts
 Aliens, is God's good winter for their
 haunts

XIII

PRaised be the Rivers, from their
 mountain springs
 Shouting to Freedom, "Plant thy
 banners here!"
 To harassed Piety "Dismiss thy fear,
 And in our caverns smooth thy ruffled
 wings!"
 Nor be unthank'd their final lingerings —
 Silent but not to high-souled Passion's
 ear —
 'Mid reedy fens wide-spread and marshes
 drear
 Their own creation Such glad wel-
 comings
 As Po was heard to give where Venice rose
 Hailed from aloft those Heirs of truth
 divine
 Who near his fountains sought obscure
 repose,
 Yet came prepared as glorious lights to
 shine,

Should that be needed for their shared
Charge
Blest Prisoners They whose spirits were
at large

XIV

2 WÄLDENSES

Those had given earliest notice as
the lark
Sprang from the ground the morn to
gratulate
Or rather rose the day to antedate
By striking out a solitary spark
When all the world with midnight
gloom was dark —
Then followed the Waldensian bands
whom Hate
In vain endeavours to exterminate
Whom Obloquy pursues with hideous
bark !
But they dissent not — and the sacred fire
Kekindled thus from dens and savage
woods
Moves handed on with never ceasing
carc
Through courts, through camps, & ei
limitar, ff
Nor lacks this sea girl fire a timely
share
Of the new Flame not suffered to expre

XV

ARCHBISHOP CHICHLI TO HENRY V
 WHAT beast in wilderness or cultured
 field
 The lively beauty of the le i d shows ?
 What flower in mead w ground (r
 garden grows
 That to the towering liv d th not
 yield ?
 Let both meet only on thy royal
 shield '
 Go forth, great King ' claim what thy
 birth bestows
 ' Conquer the Gallic hly which thy foes
 Dare to usurp —thou hast e sword to
 wield
 And Heaven will crown the right
 —The mitred Sire
 Thus spake—and lo ' a Fleet for Gaul
 address
 Ploughs her bold course across the won
 dering seas
 For, sooth to say, ambition in the
 breast
 Of youthful heroes, is no sullen fire •
 But one that leaps to meet the fanning
 breeze

XVI

WARS OF YORK AND LANCASTER
 Thus is the storm abated by the craft
 Of a shrewd Counsellor eager to protect
 1 See Note.

The Church whose power hath recently
been checked
Whose monst'rous riches threatened
So the shaft
Of victory mounts high and blood is
quaffed
In fields that rival Cressy and Poitiers—
Pride to be washed away by bitter
tears
For leopards as hell itself the avenging
draught
Of civil slaughter Yet while temporal
power
Is by these shocks exhausted spiritual
truth
Maintains the endangered gift of
life
Proceeds from infancy to lusty youth
And under cover of this woeless strife
Gathers unblighted strength from hour
to hour

XVII

WICLIFFE

ONCE more the Church is seized with
sudden fea
And at her call is Wicliffe disinhumed
Yea his li, lions to ashes are consumed
And fling into the brook that travels
near
I rthwith that ancient \ ice which
Streams can hear
Thus speaks (that \ ice which walks
upon the wind
Though sold m hard by busy human
kind)—
As thou these ash s little Brook
wilt lear
Into the Av n Av n to the tide
Of Severn Severn to the narrow seas
Into main Ocean they this deed
accuse
An emblem yields to friends and
enemies
How the bold Teacher s Doctrine
sanctified
By truth shall spread throughout the
world dispersed

XVIII

CORRUPTIONS OF THE HIGHER CLERGY
 4 **WOL to you Prelates rioting in ease**
 And cumbrous wealth—the shame of
 your estate
 8 **You on whose progress dazzling trains**
 await
 Of pompous horses whom vain titles
 please
 Who will be served by others on their
 knees
 12 **Yet will yourselves to God no service**
 pay,
 14 **Pastors who neither take nor point**
 the way

"To Heaven; for, either lost in vanities
"Ye have no skill to teach, or if ye
know

"And speak the word——" Alas!
of fearful things

'Tis the most fearful when the people's
eye

Abuse hath cleared from vain imagin-
ings;

And taught the general voice to prophesy
Of justice armed, and Pride to be laid
low.

XIX

ABUSE OF MONASTIC POWER

AND what is Penance with her knotted
thong;

Mortification with the shirt of hair,
Wan cheek, and knees indurated with
prayer,

Vigils, and fastings rigorous as long;
If cloistered Avarice scruple not to wrong
The pious, humble, useful Secular,
And rob the people of his daily care,
Scorning that world whose blindness
makes her strong?

Inversion strange! that, unto One who
lives

For self, and struggles with himself alone,
The amplest share of heavenly favour
gives;

That to a Monk allots, both in the esteem
Of God and man, place higher than to him
Who on the good of others builds his own!

* XX

MONASTIC VOLUPTUOUSNESS

YET more,—round many a Convent's
blazing fire

Unhallowed threads of revelry are spun;
There Venus sits disguised like a Nun,—
While Bacchus, clothed in semblance of
a Friar,

Pours out his choicest beverage high and
Sparkling, until it cannot choose but run
Over the bowl, whose silver lip hath won
An instant kiss of masterful desire—
To stay the precious waste. Through
every brain

The domination of the sprightly juice
Spreads high conceits to maddening Fancy
dear,

Till the arched roof, with resolute abuse
Of its grave echoes, swells a choral
strain,

Whose votive burthen is—"OUR KING-
DOM'S HERE!"

XXI

DISSOLUTION OF THE MONASTERIES

THREATS come which no submission
may assuage,

No sacrifice avert, no power dispute;

The tapers shall be quenched, the bel-
fries mute,

And, 'mid their choirs unroofed by sea-
fish rage,

The warbling wren shall find a leafy
cage;

The gadding bramble hang her purple
fruit;

And the green lizard and the gilded
Lead unmolested lives, and die of age.

The owl of evening and the woodland
fox

choose:
For their abode the shrines of Waltham
Proud Glastonbury can no more refuse

To stoop her head before these desperate
shocks—

She whose high pomp displaced, as story
Arimathean Joseph's wattled cells.—

XXII

THE SAME SUBJECT

THE lovely Nun (submissive, but more
meek)

Through saintly habit than from
effort due

To unrelenting mandates that pursue
With equal wrath the steps of strong
and weak)

Goes forth—unveiling timidly a cheek
Suffused with blushes of celestial hue,

While through the Convent's gate to open
view

Softly she glides, another home to seek.
Not Iris, issuing from her cloudy
shrine,

An Apparition more divinely bright!
Not more attractive to the dazzled sight
Those watery glories, on the stormy brine
Poured forth, while summer suns at
distance shine,

And the green vales lie hushed in sober
[light]

XXIII

CONTINUED

YET many a Novice of the cloistral shade,
And many chained by vows, with
eager glee

The warrant hail, exulting to be free;
Like ships before whose keels, full long
embayed

In polar ice, propitious winds have made
Unlooked-for outlet to an open sea,

Their liquid world, for bold discovery,
In all her quarters temptingly displayed!

Hope guides the young; but when the
old must pass

The threshold, whither shall they turn to
The hospitality—the alms (alas!

Alms may be needed)—which that House
bestowed?

Can they, in faith and worship, train the
To keep this new and questionable road?

XXIV

SAINTS

YE, too, must fly before a chasing hand,
Angels and Saints, in every hamlet,
mourned!

Ah! if the old idolatry be spurned,
Let not your radiant Shapes desert the
Land:

Her adoration was not your demand,
The fond heart proffered it—the servile
heart:

And therefore are ye summoned to de-
part,

Michael, and thou, St. George, whose
flaming brand

The Dragon quelled; and valiant Mar-
garet

Whose rival sword a like Opponent slew:
And rapt Cecilia, seraph-haunted Queen
Of harmony: and weeping Magdalene,
Who in the penitential desert met
Sales sweet as those that over Eden
blew!

XXV

THE VIRGIN

MOTHER! whose virgin bosom was un-
crossed

With the least shade of thought to sin
allied;

Woman! above all women glorified,
Our tainted nature's solitary boast;

Purer than foam on central ocean tost;
Brighter than eastern skies at daybreak
strewn

With fancied roses, than the unblemished
moon

Before her wane begins on heaven's
blue coast: [ween,

Thy Image falls to earth. Yet some, I
Not unforgiven the suppliant knee
might bend,

As to a visible Power, in which did blend
All that was mixed and reconciled in
Thee

Of mother's love with maiden purity,
Of high with low, celestial with terrene!

XXVI

APOLOGY

NOR utterly unworthy to endure
Was the supremacy of crafty Rome:

Age after age to the arch of Christendom,
Aerial keystone haughtily secure:

Supremacy from Heaven transmitted
pure, [tomb

As many hold; and, therefore, to the
Pass, some through fire—and by the
scaffold some—

Like faintly Fisher, and unbending More.
"Lightly for both the bosom's lord did
sit

"Upon his throne;" unsoftened, undis-
mayed

By aught that mingled with the tragic
Of pity or fear; and More's gay genius
played

With the inoffensive sword of native wit,
Than the bare axe more luminous and
keen.

XXVII

IMAGINATIVE REGRETS

DEEP is the lamentation! Not alone
From Sages justly honoured by man-
kind:

But from the ghostly tenants of the wind,
Demons and Spirits, many a dolorous
groan

Issues for that dominion overthrown:
Proud Tiber grieves, and far off Ganges,
blind

As his own worshippers: and Nile,
reclined [moan

Upon his monstrous urn, the farwell
Renews. Through every forest, cave,
and den,

Where frauds were hatched of old, hath
sorrow past—

Hangs o'er the Arabian Prophet's native
Waste,

Where once his airy helpers schemed and
planned [men,

Mid spectral lakes bemoeking thirsty
And stalking pillars built of fiery sand.

XXVIII

REFLECTIONS

GRANT, that by this unsparing hurricane
Green leaves with yellow mixed are torn
away, [spray:

And goodly fruitage with the mother
Twere madness—wished we, therefore,
to detain,

With hands stretched forth in mollified
disdain,

The "trumpety" that ascends in bare
display—

Bulls, pardons, relics, crows black, white,
and grey— [plain

Upwhirled, and flying o'er the ethereal
Fast bound for Limbo Lake. And yet
not choice

But habit rules the unreflecting herd,
And airy bonds are hardest to disown;

Hence, with the spiritual sovereignty
transferred

Unto itself, the Crown assumes a voice
Of reckless mastery, hitherto unknown.

XXIX

TRANSLATION OF THE BIBLE

BUT, to outweigh all harm, the sacred
Book,

In dusty sequestration wrapt too long
Assumes the accents of our native tongue
And he who guides the plough, or wields
the crook,
With understanding spirit now may look
Upon her records listen to her song
And sift her laws—much wondering that
the wrong
Which Faith has suffered, Heaven could
calmly brook [hug
Transcendent boon ' noblest that earthly
Ever bestowed to equalize and bless
Under the weight of mortal wretchedness
But passions spread like plagues and
thousands wild
With bigotry shall tread the Offering
Beneath their feet, detested and denied

XXX

THE POINT AT ISSUE

For what contend the wise?—for no
thing less
That the Soul freed from the bonds
of Sense
And to her God restored by evidence
Of things not seen drawn forth from
their recess, [ness —
Root there and not in forms her h h
For Faith which to the Patriarchs did
disperse
Sure guide since ere a ceremonial fence
Was needful round men thirsting to trans-
gress —
For Faith more perfect still with which
the Lord
Of all himself a Spirit in the youth
Of Christian aspiration designed to fill
The temples of their hearts who with his
word
Informed were resolute to do his will
And worship him in spirit and in truth

XXXI

EDWARD VI

"SWEET is the holiness of Youth —so
felt [that Lay
Time-honoured Chaucer speaking through
By which the Prioresse beguiled the way
And many a Pilgrim's rugged heart did
melt
Hadst thou loved Bard ' whose spirit
often dwelt
In the clear land of vision but foreseen
King child and seraph, blended in the
mien
Of pious Edward kneeling as he knelt
In meek and simple infancy, what joy
For universal Christendom had thrilled
Thy heart ' what hopes inspired thy
genius skilled
(O great Precursor, genuine morning Star)
The lucid shafts of reason to employ,
Piercing the Papal darkness from afar!

XXXII

EDWARD SIGNING THE WARRANT FOR THE
EXECUTION OF JOAN OF KENT

The tears of man in various measure gush
From various sources, gently overflow
From blissful transport some—from
clefts of woe
Some with ungovernable impulse rush,
And some coeval with the earliest blush
Of infant passion scarcely dare to show
Their pearly lustre—coming but to go,
And some break forth when others' sor-
rows crush
The sympathising heart Nor these,
nor yet
The noble drops to admiration known,
To gratitude to injuries forgiven—
Claim Heaven's regard like waters that
hate wet [driven
The inn cent eyes of youthful Monarchs
To pen the mandates nature doth disown.

XXXIII

REVIVAL OF BOIERY

The saintly Youth has ceased to rule,
dis-crowned
By unrelenting Death O People keen
For change, to whom the new looks
always green
Rising did they cast upon the ground
Their Gods of wood and stone, and at
the sound
Of counter proclamation now are seen,
(Proud triumph is it for a sullen Queen)
Lifting the n up the worship to con-
fess
Of the Most High Again do they in-
voke
The Creature, to the Creature glory
give,
Again with frankincense the altars smoke
Like those the Heathen served, and
mass is sung,
And prayer man's rational prerogative,
Runs through blind channels of an un-
known tongue

XXXIV

LATIMER AND RIDLEY

How fast the Marian death list is un-
rolled
See Latimer and Ridley in the night
Of Faith stand coupled for a common
flight
One (like those prophets whom God sent
of old)
Transfigured from this kindling bath
foretold
A torch of mextingushable light,
The Other gains a confidence as bold;
And thus they foil their enemy's despote,

See Note.

The penal instruments, the shows of
crime,
Are glorified while this once mitred pair
Of saintly Friends the "murderer's"
chain partake,
Corded, and burrowing at the social stake
Earth never witnessed object more
sublime
In constancy, in fellowship more fair!

XXXV

CRANMER

OUTSTRETCHING flame ward his up
• brided hand
(O God of mercy, may no earthly Seat
Of judgment such presumptuous dolt
repeat!)

Around the shuddering throng death
Cranmer stand
Firm as the stake to which with arm
band [feet
His frame is tied firm from the naked
To the baric head The victory is com-
plete,
The shrouded Body to the Soul's dom-
mand [tude
Answers with more than Indian fort
Through all her nerves with "ner sense
endued
Till breath departs in blissful spiration
Theu, mid the ghastly ruins of the fire
Behold the unalterable heart entire
Emblem of faith untouched miraculous
attestation!"

XXXVI

GENERAL VIEW OF THE TROUBLES OF THE
REFORMATION

Aid, glorious Martyrs, from your fields
of light,
Our mortal ken! Inspire a perfect
trust
(While we look round) that Heaven's
decrees are just
Which few can hold committed to a
fight
That shows, even on its better side the
might
Of proud Self will Rapacity and Lust
Mid clouds enveloped of polemic dust
Which showers of blood seem rather to
incite
Than to allay Anathemas are hurled
From both sides, veteran thunders (the
brute test
Of truth) are met by fulminations new—
Tartarean flags are caught at, and un-
furled—
Friends strike at friends—the flying shall
pursue—
And Victory sickens, ignorant where to
• For the belief in this fact, see the contem-
porary Historians.

XXXVII

ENGLISH REFORMERS IN EXILE

SCATTERING like birds escaped the fow-
ler's net
Some seek with timely flight a foreign
strand
Most happy re-assembled in a land
By dintless Luther freed could they
forget
Their Country's woes But scarce
have they met
Partners in faith and brothers in distress
Free to furth their common think-
fulness
Free hope declines—their union is
beset
With speculative notions rashly sown,
Whence thickly sprouting growth of
poisonous weed
Their forms are broken staves, their
passions steels
That master them How envitably blest
Is he who can by help of grace enthroned
In peace of God within his single
breast

XXXVIII

FLIZAFIELD

HAIL Virgin Queen! O'er many an envious
liar
Triumphant snatched from many a
treacherous wig!
All hail sage Lady whom a grateful Isle
Hath blest re-pirings from that dismal
war
Stilled by thy voice But quickly from
islar
Defiance breathes with more malig-
nant aim
And alien storms with home-bred fer-
ments clun
Portentous fellowship Her silver car,
By sleepless prudence ruled, glides slowly
on
Unhurt by violence from menaced taint
Emerging pure and seemingly more
bright
Ah! wherefore yields it to a foul con-
straint
Black as the clouds its beams dispersed,
while shone
By men and angels blest, the glorious
light!

XXXIX

EMINENT REFORMERS

METHINKS that I could trip o'er heaviest
soil,
Light as a Luoyant bark from wave to
wave,
Were mine the trusty staff that JEWEL
gave
To youthful HOOKER, in familiar style

The gift exalting, and with playful
smile;
For thus equipped, and bearing on his
head
The Donor's farewell blessing, can he
dread
Tempest, or length of way, or weight of
toil?—

More sweet than odours caught by him
who sails
Near spicy shores of Araby the blest,
A thousand times more exquisitely
sweet,
The freight of holy feeling which we meet,
In thoughtful moments, wafted by the
gales
From fields where good men walk, or
bowers wherein they rest.

XL

THE SAME

HOLY and heavenly Spirits as they are,
Spotless in life, and eloquent as wise,
With what entire affection do they
prize
Their Church reformed! labouring with
earnest care
To baffle all that may her strength im-
pair;
That Church, the unperverted Gospel's
seat;
In their afflictions a divine retreat;
Source of their liveliest hope, and tender-
est prayer!—
The truth exploring with an equal mind,
In doctrine and communion they have
sought
Firmly between the two extremes to
steer;
But theirs the wise man's ordinary lot,
To trace right courses for the stubborn
blind,
And prophesy to ears that will not hear.

XLI

DISTRACTIONS

MEN, who have ceased to reverence, soon
defy
Their forefathers; lo! sects are formed,
and split [fit
With morbid restlessness;—the ecstatic
Spreads wide; though special mysteries
multiply,
The Saints must govern, is their common
cry;
And so they labour, deeming Holy
Writ [to sit
Disgraced by aught that seems content
Beneath the roof of settled Modesty.
The Romanist exults; fresh hope he
draws
From the confusion, craftily incites

¹ See Note.

The overweening, personates the mad—
To heap disgust upon the warthier
Cause:
Totters the Throne; the new-born Church
is sad
For every wave against her peace unites.

XLII

GUNPOWDER PLOT

FEAR hath a hundred eyes that all agree
To plague her beating heart; and there
is one
(Nor idlest that!) which holds com-
munion
With things that were not, yet were
meant to be.
Aghast within its gloomy cavity
That eye (which sees as if fulfilled and
done [sun)
Crimes that might stop the motion of the
Beholds the horrible catastrophe
Of an assembled Senate unredeemed
From subterranean Treason's darkling
power:
Meanless act of sorrow infinite!
Worse than the product of that dismal
night. [shower,
When gushing, copious as a thunder-
The blood of Huguenots through Paris
streamed.

XLIII

ILLUSTRATION

THE JUNG-FRAU AND THE FALL OF THE
RHINE NEAR SCHAFFHAUSEN
THE Virgin Mountain,² wearing like a
Queen
A brilliant crown of everlasting snow,
Sheds ruin from her sides; and men
below
Wonder that aught of aspect so serene
Can link with desolation. Smooth and
green,
And seeming, at a little distance, slow,
The waters of the Rhine; but on they go
Fretting and whitening, keener and more
keen; [Flood,
Till madness seizes on the whole wide
Turned to a fearful Thing whose nostrils
breathe
Blasts of tempestuous smoke—where-
with he tries
To hide himself, but only magnifies;
And doth in more conspicuous torment
writhe,
Deafening the region in his ireful mood.

XLIV

TROUBLES OF CHARLES THE FIRST

Even such the contrast that, where'er
we move,
To the mind's eye Religion doth present;
¹ The Jung-frau.

Now with her own deep quietness content;
 Then, like the mountain, thundering
 from above
 Against the ancient pine-trees of the grove
 And the Land's humblest comforts.
 Now her mood
 Recalls the transformation of the flood,
 Whose rage the gentle skies in vain re-
 prove,
 Earth cannot check. O terrible excess
 Of headstrong will! Can this be Piety?
 No—some fierce Maniac hath usurped her
 name;
 And scourges England struggling to be
 free:
 Her peace destroyed! her hopes a wilder-
 ness!
 Her blessings cursed—her glory turned
 to shame!

XLV

LAUD¹

PREJUDGED by foes determined not to
 spare,
 An old weak Mar for vengeance thrown
 aside.
 Laud, "in the painful art of dying"
 tried,
 (Like a poor bird entangled in a snare
 Whose heart still flutters, though his
 wings forbear
 To stir in useless struggle) hath relied
 On hope that conscious innocence sup-
 plied.
 And in his prison breathes celestial air.
 Why tarryest then thy chariot? Where-
 fore stay,
 O Death! the ensanguined yet triumph-
 ant wheels,
 Which thou prepar'st, full often, to
 convey
 (What time a State with madding faction
 reels)
 The Saint or Patriot to the world that
 heals
 All wounds, all perturbations doth
 allay?

XLVI

AFFLICTIONS OF ENGLAND

HARP! could'st thou venture, on thy
 boldest string,
 The faintest note to echo which the blast
 Caught from the hand of Moses as it
 pass'd
 O'er Sinai's top, or from the Shepherd-
 king,
 Early awake, by Sion's brook, to sing
 Of dread Jehovah; then, should wood
 and waste

Hear also of that name, and mercy cast
 Off to the mountains, like a covering
 Of which the Lord was weary. Weep,
 oh! weep,
 Weep with the good, beholding King and
 Priest
 Despised by that stern God to whom
 they raise
 Their suppliant hands; but holy is the
 feast
 He keepeth; like the firmament his
 ways:
 His statutes like the chambers of the
 deep.

PART III

FROM THE RESTORATION TO THE PRESENT
TIMES

I

I SAW the figure of a lovely Maid
 Seated alone beneath a darksome tree,
 Whose fondly-overhanging canopy
 Set off her brightness with a pleasing
 shade.
 No Spirit was she; that my heart be-
 trayed,
 For she was one I loved exceedingly;
 But while I gazed in tender reverie
 (Or was it sleep that with my Fancy
 played?)
 The bright corporeal presence—form
 and face—
 Remaining still distinct grew thin and
 rare,
 Like sunny mist;—at length the golden
 hair,
 Shape, limbs, and heavenly features,
 keeping pace
 Each with the other in a lingering race
 Of dissolution, melted into air.

II

PATRIOTIC SYMPATHIES

LAST night, without a voice, that Vision
 spake
 Fear to my Soul, and sadness which
 might seem
 Wholly dis severed from our present
 theme:
 Yet, my beloved Country! I partake
 Of kindred agitations for thy sake:
 Thou, too, dost visit oft my midnight
 dream:
 My glory meets me with the earliest
 beam
 Of light, which tells that Morning is
 awake.
 If aught impair thy beauty or destroy,
 Or but forebode destruction, I deplore
 With filial love the sad vicissitude;
 If thou hast fallen, and righteous Heaven
 restore

¹ See Note.

The prostrate, then my spring time is renewed,
And sorrow battered for exceeding joy

III

CHARLES THE SECOND

Who comes—with rapture greeted, and care-sd
With frantic love—his kingdom to regain?
His virtues Nurse, Adversity in vain
Received, and fostered in her iron breast
For all she taught of hardest kind of best,
Or would have taught, by discipline of pain
And long privation now dissolves again,
Or is remembered only to give rest
To wantonness—Away! Circumvents
But for what gain? if England so must sink
Into a gulf which all distinction levels—
That bigotry may swell with the good name,
And, with that draught, the life blood
misery shame,
By Peter's bathed from which His
torious shrink!

IV

LATIN DINARIANISM

Yet truth is keenly sought for and the wind
Charged with rich words poured out in
thought's defence
Whether the Church inspire that eloquence
Or a Platonic Piety confined
To the sole temple of the inward mind
And One there is who builds immortal laws,
Though doomed to tread in solitary ways,
Darkness before and dangers vice behind
Yet not alone nor helpless to repel
Sad thoughts, for from above the starry sphere
Come secrets, whispered nightly to his ear.
And the pure spirit of celestial light
Shines through his soul—"that he may see and tell
Of things invisible to mortal sight"

V

WALTON'S BOOK OF LIVES

There are no colours in the fairest sky
So fair as these the feather, whence the pen
Was shaped that traced the lives of these
good men.

Dropped from an Angel's wing With
moistened eye
We read of faith and purest charity
In Statesman, Priest, and humble
Citizen

O could we copy their mild virtues, then,
What joy to live, that blessedness to die!
Methinks their very names shine still and
bright.

Apart—like glow-worms on a summer
night

Or lonely tapers when from far they fling
A guiding ray or seen—like stars on
high

Satellites burning in a lucid ring
Around meek Walton's heavenly me-
mory

VI

CLERICAL INFIRMITY

NOR shall the eternal roll of praise reject
Those Unconforming, whom one rigorous
day

Drive from their Cures a voluntary prey
To poverty, and grief, and disrespect,
And some to want—as if by tempest
wrecked

On a wild coast, how destitute! did
they

Feel not that Conscience never can be-
tray,

That peace of mind is Virtue's sure effect
Whose altars they forego, their homes they
quit

Fields which they love, and paths they
daily trod,

And cast the future upon Providence.
As men the dictate of whose inward
sense

Outweighs the world, whom self-
deceiving wit

Lures not from what they deem the
cause of God

VII

PERSECUTION OF THE SCOTTISH COVEN-
ANTERS

When Alpine Vales threw forth a sup-
pliant cry,

The majesty of England interposed
And the sword stopped, the bleeding
wounds were closed.

And Faith preserved her ancient purity.
How little boots that precedent of good,
Scorned or forgotten, Thou canst testify,
For England's shame, O Sister Realm!
from wood,

Mountain, and moor, and crowded street
where lie

The headless martyrs of the Covenant,
Slain by Compatriot-protestants that
draw

From councils senseless as intolerant
Their warrant. Bodies fall by wild
sword-law ;
But who would force the Soul, tilts with
a straw
Against a Champion cased in adamant.

VIII

ACQUITTAL OF THE BISHOPS

A VOICE, from long-expecting thousands
sent,
Shatters the air, and troubles tower and
spire ;
For Justice hath absolved the innocent,
And Tyranny balked of her desire.
Up, down, the busy Thames—rapid as
fire
Coursing a train of gunpowder—it went,
And transport finds in every street a
vent,

Till the whole City rings like one vast
quire.
The Fathers urge the People to be still,
With outstretched hands and earnest
speech—in vain !

Yea, many, haply wont to entertain
Small reverence for the mitre's offices,
And to Religion's self no friendly will,
A Prelate's blessing ask on bended
knees.

IX

WILLIAM THE THIRD

CALM as an under-current, strong to
draw
Millions of waves into itself, and run,
From sea to sea, impervious to the sun
And ploughing storm, the spirit of
Nassau
Swerves not, (how blest if by religious
awe
Swayed, and thereby enabled to contend
With the wide world's commotions) from
its end

Swerves not—diverted by a casual law.
Had mortal action e'er a nobler scope ?
The Hero comes to liberate, not defy :
And, while he marches on with steadfast
hope,
Conqueror, beloved ! expected anx-
iously !

The vacillating Bondman of the Pope
Shrinks from the verdict of his steadfast
eye.

X

OBLIGATIONS OF CIVIL TO RELIGIOUS
LIBERTY

UNGRATEFUL Country, if thou e'er forget
The sons who for thy civil rights have
bled !

How, like a Roman, Sidney bowed his
head

And Russel's milder blood the scaffold
wet ;

But these had fallen for profitless regret
Had not thy holy Church her champions
bred.

And claims from other worlds inspirited
The star of Liberty to rise. Nor yet
(Grave this within thy heart !) if spiritual
things

Be lost, through apathy, or scorn, or
fear,
Shall thou thy humbler franchises sup-
port,

However hardly won or justly dear :
What came from heaven to heaven by
nature clings,
And, if dissevered thence, its course is
short.

XI

SACHEVEREL

A SUDDEN conflict rises from the swell
Of a proud slavery met by tenets strained
In Liberty's behalf. Fears, true or
feigned,

Spread through all ranks ; and lo ! the
Sentinel

Who loudest rang his pulpit 'larum bell,
Stands at the Bar, absolved by female
eyes

Mingling their glances with grave flat-
teries

Lavished on Him—that England may
rebel

Against her ancient virtue. High and
Low,

Watch-words of Party, on all tongues are
rife ;

As if a Church, though sprung from
Heaven, must owe

To opposites and fierce extremes her
life,—

Not to the golden mean, and quiet flow
Of truths that soften hatred, temper
strife.

XII

DOWN a swift Stream, thus far, a bold
design

Have we pursued, with livelier stir of
heart

Than his who sees, borne forward by the
Rhine,

The living landscapes greet him, and
depart ;

Sees spires fast sinking—up again to
start !

And strives the towers to number, that
recline

O'er the dark steeps, or on the horizon
line

Striding with shattered crests his eye
athwart.

So have we hurried on with troubled
pleasure:
Henceforth, as on the bosom of a stream
That slackens, and spreads wide a watery
gleam,
We, nothing loth a lingering course to
measure,
May gather up our thoughts, and mark
at leisure
How widely spread the interests of our
theme.

XIII

ASPECTS OF CHRISTIANITY IN
AMERICA

I.—THE PILGRIM FATHERS

WELL worthy to be magnified are they
Who, with sad hearts, of friends and
country took
A last farewell, their loved abodes for-
sook,
And hallowed ground in which their
fathers lay;
Then to the new-found World explored
their way,
That so a Church, unforced, uncalled to
brook
Ritual restraints, within some sheltering
nook
For Lord might worship and his word
obey
In freedom. Men they were who could
not bend;
Blest Pilgrims, surely, as they took for
guide
A will by sovereign Conscience sancti-
fied;
Blest while their Spirits from the woods
ascend
Along a Galaxy that knows no end,
But in His glory who for Sinners died.

XIV

II. CONTINUED

FROM Rite and Ordinance abused they
fled
To Wilds where both were utterly un-
known;
But not to them had Providence fore-
shown
What benefits are missed, what evils
bred,
In worship neither raised nor limited
Save by Self-will. Lo! from that distant
shore,
For Rite and Ordinance, Piety is led
Back to the Land those Pilgrims left of
vorn,
Led by her own free choice. So Truth
and Love
By Conscience governed do their steps
retrace.—

Fathers! your Virtues, such the power of
grace,
Their spirit, in your Children, thus
approve
Transcendent over time, unbound by
place,
Concord and Charity in circles move.

XV

III. CONCLUDED.—AMERICAN EPISCO-
PACY

PATRIOTS informed with Apostolic light,
Were they, who, when their Country had
been freed,
Bowing with reverence to the ancient
creed,
Fixed on the frame of England's Church
their sight,
And strove in filial love to reunite
What force had severed. Thence they
fetched the seed
Of Christian unity, and won a meed
Of praise from Heaven. To Thee, O
saintly WHITE,
Patriarch of a wide-spreading family,
Remotest lands and untorn times shall
turn,
Whether they would restore or build—to
As one who rightly taught how zeal
should burn,
As one who drew from out Faith's
holiest urn
The purest stream of patient Energy.

XVI

BISHOPS and Priests, blessed are ye, if
deep
(As yours above all offices is high)
Deep in your hearts the sense of duty lie;
Charged as ye are by Christ to feed and
keep
From wolves your portion of his chosen
sheep:
Labouring as ever in your Master's sight,
Making your hardest task your best de-
light, [reap!—
What perfect glory ye in Heaven shall
But, in the solemn Office which ye sought
And undertook premonished, if unsound
Your practice prove, faithless though
but in thought,
Bishops and Priests, think what a gulf
profound [taught
awaits you then, if they were rightly
Who framed the Ordinance by your lives
disowned!

XVII

PLACES OF WORSHIP

As star that shines dependent upon star
Is to the sky while we look up in love;
As to the deep fair ships which though
they move [afar
Seem fixed to eyes that watch them from

As to the sandy desert fountains are,
 With palm-groves shaded at wide intervals,
 Whose fruit around the sun-burnt Native
 falls
 Of roving tired or desultory war—
 Such to this British Isle her christian
 Fanes,
 Each linked to each for kindred services;
 Her Spires, her Steeple-towers with
 glittering vanes
 Far-kennd, her Chapels lurking among
 trees,
 Where a few villagers on bended knees
 Find solace which a busy world disdains.

XVIII

PASTORAL CHARACTER

A GENIAL hearth, a hospitable board,
 And a refined rusticity, belong
 To the neat mansion, where, his flock
 among,
 The learned Pastor dwells, the watchful
 Lord.
 Though meek and patient as a sheathed
 sword;
 Though pride's least lurking thought
 appear a wrong
 To human kind; though peace be on his
 tongue,
 Gentleness in his heart—can earth
 afford
 Such genuine state, pre-eminence so
 free,
 As when, arrayed in Christ's author-
 ity,
 He from the pulpit lifts his awful hand;
 Conjures, implores, and labours all he
 can
 For re-subjecting to divine command
 The stubborn spirit of rebellious man?

XIX

THE LITURGY

Yes, if the intensities of hope and fear
 Attract us still, and passionate exer-
 cise
 Of lofty thoughts, the way before us lies
 Distinct with signs, through which in
 set career,
 As through a zodiac, moves the ritual year
 Of England's Church; stupendous
 mysteries!
 Which whose travels in her bosom, eyes,
 As he approaches them, with solemn
 cheer.
 Upon that circle traced from sacred
 story
 We only dare to cast a transient glance,
 Trusting in hope that Others may ad-
 vance
 With mind intent upon the King of

From his mild advent till his counten-
 ance
 Shall dissipate the seas and mountains
 hoary.

XX.

BAPTISM

DEAR be the Church, that, watching o'er
 the needs
 Of Infancy, provides a timely shower
 Whose virtue changes to a christian
 Flower
 A Growth from sinful Nature's bed of
 weeds!—
 Fittest beneath the sacred roof pro-
 ceeds
 The ministration: while parental Love
 Looks on, and Grace descendeth from
 above
 As the high service pledges now, now
 pleads.
 There, should vain thoughts outspread
 their wings and fly
 To meet the coming hours of festal mirth,
 The tombs—which hear and answer that
 brief cry,
 The Infant's notice of his second birth—
 Recall the wandering Soul to sympathy
 With what man hopes from Heaven, yet
 fears from Earth.

XXI

SPONSORS

FATHER! to God himself we cannot give
 A holier name! then lightly do not bear
 Both names conjoined, but of thy
 spiritual care
 Be duly mindful: still more sensitive
 Do Thou, in truth a second Mother,
 strive
 Against disheartening custom, that by
 Thee
 Watched, and with love and pious in-
 dustry
 Tended at need, the adopted Plant may
 thrive
 For everlasting bloom. Benign and
 pure
 This Ordinance, whether loss it would
 supply,
 Prevent omission, help deficiency,
 Or seek to make assurance doubly sure.
 Shame if the consecrated Vow be found
 An idle form, the Word an empty
 sound!

XXII

CATECHISING

FROM Little down to Least, in due de-
 gree,
 Around the Pastor, each in new-wrought
 vest,

Each with a vernal posy at his breast,
We stood, a trembling, earnest Com-
pany!

With low soft murmur, like a distant bee,
Some spake, by thought-perplexing
fears betrayed;

And some a bold unerring answer made:
How fluttered then thy anxious heart
for me,

Belovèd Mother! Thou whose happy
hand

Had bound the flowers I wore, with
faithful tie:

Sweet flowers! at whose inaudible com-
mand

Her countenance, phantom-like, doth
re-appear:

O lost too early for the frequent tear,
And ill requited by this heartfelt sigh!

XXIII

CONFIRMATION

THE Young-ones gathered in from hill
and dale,

With holiday sleight on every brow:

'Tis passed away; far other thoughts
prevail:

For they are taking the baptismal Vow
Upon their conscious selves; their own
lips speak

The solemn promise. Strongest sinews
fail,

And many a blooming, many a lovely,
cheek

Under the holy fear of God turns pale;
While on each head his lawn-robed Ser-
vant lays

An apostolic hand, and with prayer
seals

The Covenant. The Omnipotent will
raise

Their feeble Souls; and bear with his
regrets,

Who, looking round the fair assemblage,
feels

That ere the Sun goes down their child-
hood sets.

XXIV

CONFIRMATION CONTINUED

I SAW a Mother's eye intensely bent
Upon a Maiden trembling as she knelt;
In and for whom the pious Mother felt
Things that we judge of by a light too
faint:

Tell, if ye may, some star-crowned Muse,
or Saint!

Tell what rushed in, from what she was
relieved—

Then, when her Child the hallowing
touch received,

And such vibration through the Mother
went

That tears burst forth again. Did
gleams appear?

Opened a vision of that blissful place
Where dwells a Sister-child? And was

power given
Part of her lost One's glory back to trace

Even to this Rite? For thus *She* knelt,
and, ere

The summer leaf had faded, passed to
Heaven.

XXV

"SACRAMENT

By chain yet stronger must the Soul be
tied:

One duty more, last stage of this a-cent,
Brings to thy food, mysterious Sacra-
ment!

The Offspring, haply at the Parent's
side;

But not till They, with all that do abide
In Heaven, have lifted up their hearts

to laud
And magnify the glorious name of God,

Fountain of grace, whose Son for sinners
died.

Ye, who have duly weighèd the summons,
pause

No longer, ye, whom to the saving rite
The Altar calls; come early under laws

That can secure for you a path of light
Through gloomiest shade; put on (nor

dread its weight)
Armour divine, and conquer in your

cause!

XXVI

THE MARRIAGE CEREMONY

THE Vested Priest before the Altar
stands:

Approach, come gladly, ye prepared, in
sight

Of God and chosen friends, your troth
to plight

With the symbolic ring, and willing
hands

Solemnly joined. Now sanctify the
bands

O Father!—to the Espoused thy bless-
ing give,

That mutually assisted they may live
Obedient, as here taught, to thy com-
mands.

So prays the Church, to consecrate a
Vow

"The which would endless matrimony
make;"

Union that shadows forth and doth
partake

A mystery potent human love to endow
With heavenly, each more prized for the

other's sake;
Weep not, meek Bride! uplift thy timid

brow.

XXVII

THANKSGIVING AFTER CHILDBIRTH

WOMAN! the Power who left his throne
on high,
And deigned to wear the robe of flesh we
wear,
The power that thro' the straits of
Infancy
Did pass dependant on maternal care,
His own humanity with Thee will share,
Pleased with the thanks, that in his
People's eye
Thou offerest up for safe Delivery
From Childbirth's perilous throes. And
should the Heir
Of thy fond hopes hereafter walk inclined
To courses fit to make a mother rue
That ever he was born, a glance of mind
Cast upon this observance may renew
A better will; and, in the imagined view
Of thee thus kneeling, safety he may
find.

XXVIII

VISITATION OF THE SICK

THE Sabbath bells renew the inviting
peal:
Glad music! yet there be that, worn with
pain
And sickness, listen where they long have
lain,
In sadness listen. With maternal zeal
Inspired, the Church sends ministers to
kneel
Beside the afflicted; to sustain with
prayer,
And soothe the heart confession hath laid
bare—
That pardon, from God's throne, may
set its seal
On a true Penitent. When breath de-
parts
From one disburthened so, so comforted,
His Spirit Angels greet; and ours be hope
That, if the Sufferer rise from his sick-
bed,
Hence he will gain a firmer mind, to cope
With a bad world, and foil the Tempter's
arts.

XXIX

THE COMMINATION SERVICE

SHUN not this Rite, neglected, yea ab-
horred,
By some of unreflecting mind, as calling
Man to curse man, (thought monstrous
and appalling.)
Go thou and hear the threatenings of
the Lord;
Listening within his Temple see his
sword
Unsheathed in wrath to strike the
offender's head.

Thy own, if sorrow for thy sin be dead,
Guilt unrepented, pardon unimplored.
Two aspects bears Truth needful for
salvation:
Who knows not *that*?—yet would this
delicate age
Look only on the Gospel's brighter page:
Let light and dark duly our thoughts
employ;
So shall the fearful words of Commina-
tion
Yield timely fruit of peace and love and
joy.

XXX

FORMS OF PRAYER AT SEA

To Kneeling Worshipers no earthly
floor
Gives holier invitation than the deck
Of a storm-shattered Vessel saved from
Wreck
(When all that Man could do avail'd no
more)
By him who raised the Tempest and
restrains:
Happy the crew who this have felt, and
pour
Forth for his mercy, as the Church
ordains,
Solemn thanksgiving. Nor will *they*
implore
In vain who, for a rightful cause, give
breath
To words the Church prescribes aiding
the lip
For the heart's sake, ere ship with hostile
ship
Encounters, armed for work of pain
and death.
Suppliants! the God to whom your
cause ye trust
Will listen, and ye know that He is
just.

XXXI

FUNERAL SERVICE

FROM the Baptismal hour, thro' weal
and woe,
The Church extends her care to thought
and deed;
Nor quits the Body when the Soul is
freed,
The mortal weight cast off to be laid low.
Blest Rite for him who hears in faith,
"I know
That my Redeemer liveth,"—hears each
word
That follows—striking on some kindred
chord
Deep in the thankful heart;—yet tears
will flow.
Man is as grass that springeth up at morn;
Grows green, and is cut down and
withereth.

Ere nightfall—truth that well may claim
 a sigh,
 Its natural echo; but hope comes reborn
 At Jesu's bidding. We rejoice, "O
 Death
 Where is thy sting?"—O Grave where is
 thy Victory?"

XXXII

RURAL CEREMONY¹

Closing the sacred Book which long has
 fed
 Our meditations, give we to a day,
 Of annual joy one tributary lay;
 This day, when, forth by rustic music led,
 The village Children, while the sky is red
 With evening lights, advance in long
 array
 Through the still church-yard, each
 with garland gay, [head
 That, carried sceptre-like, o'ertops the
 Of the proud Bearer. To the wide
 church-door,
 Charged with these offerings which their
 fathers bore
 For decoration in the Papal time,
 The innocent Procession softly moves:—
 The spirit of Laud is pleased in heaven's
 pure clime,
 And Hooker's voice the spectacle
 approves!

XXXIII

REGRETS

Would that our scrupulous Sires had
 dared to leave [rites
 Less scanty measure of those graceful
 And usages, whose due return invites
 A stir of mind too natural to deceive;
 Giving to Memory help when she would
 weave
 A crown for Hope!—I dread the hoisted
 lights
 That all too often are but fiery blights,
 Killing the bud o'er which in vain we
 grieve.
 Go, seek, when Christmas snows dis-
 comfort bring, [church
 The counter Spirit found in some gay
 Green with fresh holly, every pew a
 perch [sing,
 In which the linnet or the thrush might
 Merry and loud and safe from prying
 search,
 Strains offered only to the genial Spring.

XXXIV

MUTABILITY

From low to high doth dissolution
 climb,
 And sink from high to low, along a
 scale

¹ See Note.

Of awful notes, whose concord shall not
 fail;
 A musical but melancholy chime,
 Which they can hear who meddle not
 with crime,
 Nor avarice, nor over-anxious care.
 Truth fails not: but her outward forms
 that bear
 The longest date do melt like frosty rime,
 That in the morning whitened hill and
 plain
 And is no more; drop like the tower
 sublime
 Of yesterday, which royally did wear
 His crown of weeds, but could not ever
 sustain
 Some casual shout that broke the silent
 air.
 Of the unimaginable touch of Time.

XXXV

OLD ABBEYS

MONASTIC Domes! following my down-
 ward way,
 Untouched by due regret I marked your
 fall!
 Now, ruin, beauty, ancient stillness, all
 Dispose to judgments temperate as we
 lay
 On our past selves in life's declining day:
 For as, by discipline of Time made wise,
 We learn to tolerate the infirmities
 And faults of others—gently as he may,
 So with our own the mild Instructor
 deals,
 Teaching us to forget them or forgive.
 Perversely curious, then, for hidden ill
 Why should we break Time's charitable
 seals?
 Once ye were holy, ye are holy still;
 Your spirit freely let me drink, and live!

XXXVI

EMIGRANT FRENCH CLERGY

EVEN while I speak, the sacred roofs
 of France
 Are shattered into dust; and self-
 exiled
 From altars threatened, levelled, or
 defiled,
 Wander the Ministers of God, as chance
 Opens a way for life, or consonance
 Of faith invites. More welcome to no
 land
 The fugitives than to the British strand,
 Where priest and layman with the
 vigilance
 Of true compassion greet them. Creed
 and test
 Vanish before the unreserved embraces
 Of catholic humanity—distreat
 They came,—and, while the moral
 tempest roars

Throughout the Country they have left,
our shores
Give to their Faith a fearless resting-
place.

XXXVII

CONGRATULATION

Thus all things lead to Charity, secured
By them who blessed the soft and happy
gale
That landward urged the great Deliverer's
sail,
Till in the sunny bay his fleet was moored!
Propitious hour! had we, like them,
endured
Sore stress of apprehension, with a
mind
Sickened by injuries, dreading worse
designed,
From month to month trembling and
unassured,
How had we then rejoiced! But we
have felt.

As a loved substance, their futurity:
Good, which they dared not lose for,
we have seen;

A State whose generous will through
earth is dealt;

A State—which, balancing herself
between

Licence and slavish order, dares be
free.

XXXVIII

NEW CHURCHES

But liberty, and triumphs on the Main,
And laurelled armies, not to be with-
stood—

What serve they? if, on transitory good
intent, and sedulous of abject gain.

The State (ah, surely not preserved in
vain!)

Forbear to shape due channels which
the Flood

Of sacred truth may enter—till it brood
O'er the wide realm, as o'er the Egyptian
plain

The all-sustaining Nile. No more—
the time

Is conscious of her want; through
England's bounds,

In rival haste, the wished-for Temples
rise!

I hear their Sabbath bells' harmonious
chime

Floating on the breeze—the heavenliest of
all sounds

That vale or hill prolongs or multiplies!

XXXIX

CHURCH, TO BE ERECTED

Be this the chosen site; the virgin sod,
Moistened from age to age by dewy eve,

¹ See Note.

Shall disappear, and grateful earth
receive

The corner-stone from hands that build
to God.

Yon reverend hawthorns, hardened to
the rod

Of winter storms, yet budding cheerfully;
Those forest oaks of Druid memory,

Shall long survive, to shelter the Abode
Of genuine Faith. Where, haply, mid
this band

Of daisies, shepherds sate of yore and
wove

May-land, there let the holy altar
stand

For kneeling adoration;—while—above,
Broods, visibly portrayed, the mystic

Dove,
That shall protect from blasphemy the
Land.

XL

CONTINUED

MINE ear has rung, my spirit sunk sub-
dued,

Sharing the strong emotion of the
crowd.

When each pale brow to dread hosannas
bowed

While clouds of incense mounting veiled
the rood.

That glimmered like a pine-tree dimly
viewed

Through Alpine vapours. Such appal-
ling rite

Our Church prepares not, trusting to the
might

Of simple truth with grace divine im-
bued;

Yet will we not conceal the precious
Cross,

Like men ashamed: the Sun with his
first smile

Shall greet that symbol crowning the
low Pilc:

And the fresh air of incense-breathing
morn

Shall wooingly embrace it; and green
Creep round its arms through centuries
unborn.

XLI

NEW CHURCH-YARD

THE encircling ground, in native turf
arrayed,

Is now by solemn consecration given
To social interests, and to favouring
Heaven,

And where the rugged colts their gam-
bols played,

And wild deer bounded through the
forest glade,

Unchecked as when by merry Outlaw
driven,

Shall hymns of praise resound at morn
and even;
And soon, full soon, the lonely Sexton's
spade
Shall wound the tender sod. Encinc-
-ture small,
But infinite its grasp of weal and woe!
Hopes, fears, in never-ending ebb and
flow:—
The spousal trembling, and the "dust
to dust,"
The prayers, the contrite struggle,
and the trust
That to the Almighty Father looks
through all.

XLII

CATHEDRALS, ETC.

OPEN your gates, ye everlasting Piles!
Types of the spiritual Church which God
hath reared;
Not loth we quit the newly-hallowed
sward
And humble altar, 'mid your sump-
-tuous aisles
To kneel, or thrud your intricate defiles.
Or down the nave to pace in motion
slow;
Watching, with upward eye, the tall
tower grow
And mount, at every step, with living
wiles
Instinct—to rouse the heart and lead the
will
By a bright ladder to the world above.
Open your gates, ye Monuments of love
Divine! thou Lincoln, on thy sovereign
hill!
Thou, stately York! and Ye, whose
splendours cheer
Isis and Cam, to patient Science dear!

XLIII

INSIDE OF KING'S COLLEGE CHAPEL,
CAMBRIDGE

Tax not the royal Saint with vain
expense,
With ill-matched aims the Architect
who planned—
Albeit labouring for a scanty band
Of white robed Scholars only—this
immense
And glorious Work of fine intelligence!
Give all thou canst; high Heaven rejects
the lore
Of nicely-calculated less or more;
So deemed the man who fashioned for
the sense
These lofty pillars, spread that branching
roof
Self-poised, and scooped into ten thousand
cells,

Where light and shade repose, where
music dwells
Lingering—and wandering on as loth
to die;
Like thoughts whose very sweetness
yieldeth proof
That they were born for immortality.

XLIV

THE SAME

WHAT awful perspective! while from
our sight
With gradual stealth the lateral windows
hide
Their Portraitures, their stone-work
glimmers, dyed
In the soft chequerings of a sleepy light.
Martyr, or King, or sainted Eremité,
Whoe'er ye be, that thus, yourself
unseen,
Imbue your prison-bars with solemn
sheen.
Shine on, until ye fade with coming
night!—
But, from the arms of silence—list!
O list!
The music bursteth into second life;
The notes luxuriate, every stone is kissed
By sound, or ghost of sound, in mazy
strife;
Heart-thrilling strains, that cast, before
the eye
Of the devout, a veil of ecstasy!

XLV

CONTINUED

THEY dreamt not of a perishable home
Who thus could build. Be mine, in
hours of fear
Or grovelling thought, to seek a refuge
here;
Or through the aisles of Westminster to
roam;
Where bubbles burst, and folly's dancing
foam
Melts, if it cross the threshold; where
the wreath
Of awe-struck wisdom droops: or let my
path
Lead to that younger Pile, whose sky-
like dome
Hath typified by reach of daring art
infinity's embrace; whose guardian
crest,
The silent cross, among the stars shall
spread
As now, when She hath also seen her
breast
Filled with mementos, satiate with its
part
Of grateful England's overflowing Dead.

XLVI

EJACULATION

GLORY to God! and to the Power who
came
In filial duty, clothed with love divine,
That made His human tabernacle shine
Like Ocean burning with purpleal
flame;
Or like the Alpine Mount, that takes
its name
From roseate hues, far kenne'd at morn
and even,
In hours of peace, or when the storm is
driven
Along the nether region's rugged frame!
Earth prompts—Heaven urges; let us
seek the light,
Studious of that pure intercourse begun
When first our infant brows their lustre
won;
So, like the Mountain, may we grow more
bright
From unimpeded commerce with the
Sun,
At the approach of ail-involving light.

XLVII

CONCLUSION

WHY sleeps the future, as a snake en-
rolled,
Coil within coil, at noon-tide? For
the Word
Yields, if with unpretentious faith
explored, [unfold
Power at whose touch the sluggard shall
His drowsy rings. Look forth!—that
Stream behold,
THAT STREAM upon whose bosom we
have passed [effaced
Floating at ease while nations have
Nations, and Death has gathered to
his fold
Long lines of mighty Kings—look forth,
my soul!
(Nor in this vision be thou slow to trust)
The living waters, less and less by guilt
Stained and polluted, brighten as they
roll,
Till they have reached the eternal City—
built
For the perfected Spirits of the just!

YARROW REVISITED, AND OTHER POEMS

COMPOSED (TWO EXCEPTED) DURING A TOUR IN SCOTLAND, AND ON
THE ENGLISH BORDER, IN THE AUTUMN OF 1831

TO

SAMUEL ROGERS, ESQ.,

AS A TESTIMONY OF FRIENDSHIP, AND ACKNOWLEDGMENT OF INTELLECTUAL OBLIGATIONS, THESE
MEMORIALS ARE AFFECTIONATELY INSCRIBED

RYDAL MOUNT, Dec. 11, 1834.

I

[The following Stanzas are a memorial of a
day passed with Sir Walter Scott, and other
Friends visiting the Banks of the Yarrow
under his guidance, immediately before his
departure from Abbotsford, for Naples.

The title "Yarrow Revisited" will stand in no
need of explanation, for Readers acquainted
with the Author's previous poems suggested
by that celebrated Stream.]

THU gallant Youth, who may have
gained,

Or seeks, a "winsome Marrow,"

Was but an Infant in the lap

When first I looked on Yarrow;

Once more, by Newark's Castle-gate

Long left without a warder,

I stood, looked, listened, and with Thee,
Great Minstrel of the Border!

Grave thoughts ruled wide on that sweet
day,
Their dignity installing

W. D.

In gentle bosoms, while sere leaves

Were on the bough, or falling:

But breezes played, and sunshine
gleamed—

The forest to embolden;

Reddened the fiery hues, and shot

Transparence through the golden.

For busy thoughts the Stream flowed on

In foamy agitation;

And slept in many a crystal pool

For quiet contemplation:

No public and no private care

The freeborn mind enthralled,

We made a day of happy hours,

Our happy days recalling.

Brisk Youth appeared, the Morn of
youth,

With treaks of graceful folly,—

Life's temperate Noon, her sober Eve,

Her night not melancholy:

A. A.

Past, present, future, all appeared
In harmony united,
Like guests that meet, and some from far,
By cordial love invited.

And if, as Yarrow, through the woods
And down the meadow ranging,
Did meet us with unaltered face,
Though we were changed, and chang-
ing;

If, then, some natural shadows spread
Our inward prospect over,
The soul's deep valley was not slow
Its brightness to recover.

Eternal blessings on the Muse,
And her divine employment !
The blameless Muse, who trains her Sons
For hope and calm enjoyment ;
Albeit sickness, lingering yet,
Has o'er their pillow brooded ;
And Care waylays their steps—a Sprite
Not easily eluded.

For thee, O Scott ! compelled to change
Green Eildon-hill and Cheviot
For warm Vesuvio's vine-clad slopes ;
And leave thy Tweed and Tiviot
For mild Soronto's breezy waves ;
May classic Fancy, linking
With native Fancy her fresh aid,
Preserve thy heart from sinking !

O ! while they minister to thee,
Each vying with the other,
May Health return to mellow Age
With Strength, her venturous brother ;
And Tiber, and each brook and rill
Renowned in song and story,
With unimagined beauty shine,
Nor lose one ray of glory !

For Thou, upon a hundred streams,
By tales of love and sorrow,
Of faithful love, undaunted truth,
Hast shed the power of Yarrow ;
And streams unknown, hills yet unseen,
Wherever they invite Thee,
At parent Nature's grateful call,
With gladness must requite Thee.

A gracious welcome shall be thine,
Such looks of love and honour
As thy own Yarrow gave to me
When first I gazed upon her ;
Beheld what I had feared to see,
Unwilling to surrender
Dreams treasured up from early days,
The holy and the tender.

And what, for this frail world, were all
That mortals do or suffer,
Did no responsive harp, no pen,
Memorial tribute offer ?
Yea, what were mighty Nature's self ?
Her features, could they win us,

Unhelped by the poetic voice
That hourly speaks within us ?

Nor deem that localised Romance
Plays false with our affections :
Unsanctifies our tears—made sport
For fanciful dejections :
Ah, no ! the visions of the past
Sustain the heart in feeling
Life as she is—our changeful Life,
With friends and kindred dealing.

Bear witness, Ye, whose thoughts that
day

In Yarrow's groves were centred ;
Who through the silent portal arch
Of mouldering Newerk enter'd :
And clomb the winding stair that once
Too timidly was mounted
By the "last Minstrel," (not the last !)
Ere he his Tale recounted.

Flow on for ever, Yarrow Stream !
Fulfil thy pensive duty,
Well pleased that future Bards should
chant

For simple hearts thy beauty :
To dream-light dear while yet unseen,
Dear to the common sunshine,
And dearer still, as now I feel,
To memory's shadowy moonshine !

II

ON THE DEPARTURE OF SIR WALTER
SCOTT FROM ABBOTSFORD FOR NAPLES
A TROUBLE, not of clouds, or weeping
rain,
Nor of the setting sun's pathetic light
Engendered, hangs o'er Eildon's triple
height :
Spirits of Power, assembled there, com-
plain
For kindred Power departing from their
sight ;
While Tweed, best pleased in chanting a
blithe strain,
Saddens his voice again, and yet again.
Lift up your hearts, ye Mourners ! for the
might
Of the whole world's good wishes with
him goes :
Blessings and prayers in nobler retinue
Than sceptred king or laurelled con-
queror knows,
Follow this wondrous Potentate. Be
true,
Ye winds of ocean, and the midland sea,
Wafting your Charge to soft Parthenope !

III

A PLACE OF BURIAL IN THE SOUTH OF
SCOTLAND
PART fenced by man, part by a rugged
steep

That curbs a foaming brook, a Grave-
yard lies;
The hare's best couching-place for fear-
less sleep;
Which moonlit elves, far seen by credu-
lous eyes,
Enter in dance. Of church, or sabbath
ties,
No vestige now remains; yet thither
creep
Bereft Ones, and in lovely anguish weep
Their prayers out to the wind and naked
skies.
Proud tomb is none; but rudely-sculp-
tured knights.
By humble choice of plain old times, are
seen
Level with earth, among the hillocks
green:
Union not sad, when sunny daybreak
smites
The spangled turf, and neighbouring
thickets ring
With jubilate from the choirs of spring.

IV

ON THE SIGHT OF A MANSE IN THE SOUTH
OF SCOTLAND

SAY, ye far-travelled clouds, far-seeing
hills—
Among the happiest-looking homes of
men
Scatter'd all Britain over, through deep
glens,
On airy upland, and by forest rills,
And o'er wide plains cheered by the lark
that whills
His sky-born warblings—does aught
meet your ken
More fit to animate the Poet's pen.
Aught that more surely by its aspect
fills
Pure minds with sinless envy, than the
Abode
Of the good Priest: who, faithful
through all hours
To his high charge, and truly serving
God,
Has yet a heart and hand for trees and
flowers,
Enjoys the walks his predecessors trod,
Nor covets lineal rights in lands and
towers.

V

COMPOSED IN ROSLIN CHAPEL, DURING A
STORM

The wind is now thy organist;—a clank
(We know not whence) ministers for a
bell
To mark some change of service. As the

Of music reached its height, and even
when sank
The notes, in prelude, Roslin! to a
blank
Of silence, how it thrilled thy sumptuous
roof,
Pillars, and arches,—not in vain time-
proof,
Though Christian rites be wanting!
From what bank
Came those live herbs? by what hand
were they sown
Where dew falls not, where rain-drops
seem unknown?
Yet in the Temple they a friendly niche
Share with their sculptured fellows, that,
green-grown,
Copy their beauty more and more, and
preach,
Though mute, of all things blending into
one.

VI

THE TROSSACHS

THERE'S not a nook within this solemn
Pass,
But were an apt confessional for One
Taught by his summer spent, his autumn
gone,
That Life is but a tale of morning grass
Withered at eve. From scenes of art
which chase
That thought away, turn, and with watch-
ful eyes
Feed it 'mid Nature's old felicities,
Rocks, rivers, and smooth lakes more
clear than glass
Untouched, unbreathed upon. Thrice
happy quest,
If from a golden perch of aspen spray
(October's workmanship to rival May)
The pensive warbler of the ruddy breast
That moral sweeten by a heaven-taught
lay,
Lulling the year, with all its cares, to
rest!

VII

THE pibroch's note, discountenanced or
mute;
The Roman kilt, degraded to a toy
Of quaint apparel for a half-spoilt boy;
The target mouldering like ungathered
fruit;
The smoking steam-boat eager in pursuit,
As eagerly pursued; the umbrella
spread
To weather-fend the Celtic herdsman's
head—
All speak of manners withering to the
root,
And of old honours, too, and passions
high

Then may we ask, though pleased that
thought should range
Among the conquests of civility,
Survives imagination—to the change
Superior? Help to virtue does she
give?

If not, O Mortals, better cease to live!

VIII

COMPOSED IN THE GLEN OF LOCH ETIVE
"This Land of Rainbows spanning
glens whose walls,

Rock-built, are hung "with rainbow-
coloured mists—

Of far-stretched Meres whose salt flood
never rests—

Of tuneful Caves and playful Water-
falls—

Of Mountains varying momentarily their
crests—

Proud be this Land! whose poorest huts
are halls

Where Fancy entertains becoming
guests;

While native song the heroic Past recalls."
Thus, in the net of her own wishes

caught,
The Muse exclaimed; but Story now
must hide

Her trophies, Fancy crouch; the course
of pride

Has been diverted, other lessons taught,
That make the Patriot-spirit bow her
head

Where the all-conquering Roman feared
to tread.

IX

EAGLES

COMPOSED AT DUNOLLIH CASTLE IN THE BAY
OF OBAN

DISHONOUR'D Rock and Ruin! that,
by law

Tyrannic, keep the Bird of Jove em-
barred

Like a lone criminal whose life is spared.
Vexed is he, and screams loud. The last

I saw
Was on the wing; stooping, he struck
with awe

Man, bird, and beast; then, with a con-
sort paired,

From a bold headland, their loved airy's
guard.

Flew high above Atlantic waves, to draw
Light from the fountain of the setting
sun.

Such was this Prisoner once; and, when
his plumes

The sea-blast ruffles as the storm comes
on,

Then, for a moment, he, in spirit, re-
sumes.

His rank 'mong freeborn creatures that
live free,

His power, his beauty, and his majesty.

X

IN THE SOUND OF MULL

TRADITION, be thou mute! Oblivion,
throw

Thy veil in mercy o'er the records, hung
Round strath and mountain, stamped

by the ancient tongue
On rock and ruin darkening as we go,—

Spots where a word, ghost-like, survives
to show

What crimes from hate, or desperate love,
have sprung;

From honour misconceived, or fancied
"wrong,"

What feuds, not quenched but fed by
mutual woe.

Yet, though a wild vindictive Race, un-
tamed

By civil strife and labours of the pen,
Could gentleness be scorned by those

fierce Men,
Who, to spread wide the reverence they
claimed

For patriarchal occupations, named
Yon towering Peaks, "Shepherds of

Etive Glen?"

XI

SUGGESTED AT TYNDRUM IN A STORM

ENOUGH of garlands, of the Arcadian
crook,

And all that Greece and Italy have sung
Of Swains reposing myrtle groves among!

Ours couch on naked rocks,—will cross a
brook

Sworn with chill rains, nor ever cast a look
This way or that, or give it even a

thought
More than by smoothest pathway may he
brought

Into a vacant mind. Can written book
Teach what they learn? Up, hardy

Mountaineer!

And guide the Bard, ambitious to be One
Of Nature's privy council, as thou art.

On cloud-sequestered heights, that see
and hear

To what dread Powers He delegates his
part

On earth, who works in the heaven of
heavens, alone.

XII

THE EARL OF BREADALBANE'S RUINED
MANSION, AND FAMILY BURIAL-
PLACE, NEAR KILLIN

Well sang the Bard who called the
grave, in strains

Thoughtful and sad the "narrow house"
 No style
 Of fond sepulchral flattery can beguile
 Grief of her sting, nor cheat, where he
 detains
 The sleeping dust, stern Death How
 reconcile
 With truth, or with each other, decked
 remains
 Of a once warm Abode, and that new
 Pile,
 For the departed, built with curious pains
 And mausolean pomp? Yet here they
 stand
 Together — mud trim walks and artful
 bowers,
 To be looked down upon by ancient hills
 That for the living and the dead demand
 And prompt a harmony of genuine
 powers.
 Concord that elevates the mind, and
 stills

XIII

"REST AND BE THANKFUL!"
 AT THE HEAD OF GLASSBORO
 DOUBLING and doubling with laborious
 walk,
 Who, that has gazed at length the
 wished for Height,
 This brief this simple way side Call can
 slight
 And rests not thankful? Whether
 cheered by talk
 With some loved friend, or by the unseen
 hawk
 Whistling to clouds and sky born streams,
 that shine
 At the sun's outbreak, as with light
 divine,
 Ere they descend to nourish root and
 stalk
 Of valley flowers Nor while the limbs
 repose,
 Will we forget that, as the fowl can keep
 Absolute stillness, poised aloft in air
 And fishes front, unmoved, the torrent's
 sweep.—
 So may the Soul, through powers that
 Faith bestows,
 Win rest, and ease, and peace, with
 bliss that Angels share

XIV

HIGHLAND HUT

See what gay wild flowers deck this
 earth built Cot,
 Whose smoke, forth-issuing whence and
 how it may,
 Shines in the greeting of the sun's first
 ray
 Like wreaths of vapour without stain or
 blot

The limpid mountain rill avoids it not.
 And why shouldst thou?—If rightly
 trained and bred,
 Humanity is humble, finds no spot
 Which her Heaven guided feet refuse to
 tread
 The walls are cracked, sunk is the flowery
 roof
 Undressed the pathway leading to the
 door,
 But love is Nature loves the lonely
 Poor
 Search for their worth, some gentle
 heart wrong proof
 Meek patient kind, and, were its trials
 fewer
 Belike less happy—Stand no more
 aloft

XV

THE HIGHLAND BROACH

The exact resemblance which the old Broach
 (still in use though rarely met with among the
 Highlanders) bears to the Roman Fibula must
 strike every one and concurs with the plaid
 and kilt to recall to mind the communication
 which the ancient Romans had with this
 remote country

It to Tradition faith be due
 And echoes from old verse speak true,
 Ere the meek Sun, Columbia, bore
 Glad tidings to Iona's shore
 No common light of nature blessed
 The mountain region of the west,
 A land where gentle manners ruled
 Or men in diuine virtues schooled,
 That raised for centuries, a bar
 Impervious to the tide of war
 Yet peaceful Arts did entrance gain
 Where haughty Force had striven in
 vain
 And mid the works of skilful hands,
 By wanderers brought from foreign
 lands
 And various climes, was not unknown
 The clasp that fixed the Roman Crown,
 The Fibula, whose shape I ween,
 Still in the Highland Broach is seen,
 The silver Broach of royal frame,
 Worn at the breast of some grave Dame
 On road or path or at the door
 Of fern thatched hut on heathy moor
 But delicate of yore its mould,
 And the material finest gold,
 As might be seen the fairest Fair,
 Whether she graced a royal chair,
 Or shed within a vaulted hall,
 No fancied lustre on the wall
 Where shields of mighty heroes hung
 While Fingal heard what Ossian sung
 The heroic Age expired—it slept
 Deep in its tomb—the bramble crept

See Note.

O'er Fingal's hearth : the grassy sod
Grew on the floors his sons had trod :
Malvina ! where art thou ? Their state
The noblest-born must abdicate :
The fairest, while with fire and sword
Come Spoilers—horde impelling horde,
Must walk the sorrowing mountains,
drest

By ruder hands in homelier vest.
Yet still the female bosom lent,
And loved to borrow, ornament ;
Still was its inner world a place
Reached by the dews of heavenly grace :
Still pity to this last retreat
Clove fondly : to his favourite seat
Love wound his way by soft approach,
Beneath a massier Highland Broach.

When alternations came of rage
Yet fiercer, in a darker age ;
And feuds, where, clan encountering
clan,

The weaker perished to a man ;
For maid and mother, when despair
Might else have triumphed, baffling
prayer,

One small possession lacked not power,
Provided in a calmer hour,
To meet such need as might befall—
Roof, raiment, bread, or burial :
For woman, even of tears bereft,
The hidden silver Broach was left.

As generations come and go
Their arts, their customs, ebb and flow ;
Fate, fortune, sweep strong powers away,
And feeble, of themselves, decay :
What poor abodes the heir-loom hide,
In which the castle once took pride !
Tokens, once kept as boasted wealth,
If saved at all, are saved by stealth.
Lo ! ships, from seas by nature barred,
Mount along ways by man prepared :
And in far-stretching vales, whose
streams

Seek other seas, their canvas gleams.
Lo ! busy towns spring up, on coasts
Thronged yesterday by airy ghosts :
Soon, like a lingering star forlorn
Among the novelties of morn,
While young delights on old encroach,
Will vanish the last Highland Broach.

But when, from out their viewless bed,
Like vapours, years have rolled and
spread ;

And this poor verse, and worthier lays,
Shall yield no light of love or praise ;
Thou, by the spade, or cleaving plough,
Or torrent from the mountain's brow,
Or whirlwind, reckless what his might,
Entombs, or forces into light ;
Blind Chance, a volunteer ally,
That off befriends Antiquity.

And clears Oblivion from reproach,
May render back the Highland Broach.¹

XVI

THE BROWNIE

Upon a small island not far from the head of
Loch Lomond, are some remains of an ancient
building, which was for several years the
abode of a solitary Individual, one of the last
survivors of the clan of Macfarlane, once
powerful in that neighbourhood. Passing
along the shore opposite this island in the
year 1874, the Author learned these par-
ticulars, and that this person then living there
had acquired the appellation of "The Brownie."
¹ See "The Brownie's Cell," p. 240, to which
the following is a sequel.

"How disappeared he?" Ask the newt
and toad ;

Ask of his fellow men, and they will tell
How he was found, cold as an icicle,
Under an arch of that forlorn abode ;

Where he, unprop'd, and by the
gathering flood

Of years hemm'd round, had dwelt, pre-
pared to try
Privation's worst extremities, and die
With no one near save the omnipresent
God.

Verily so to live was an awful choice—
A choice that wears the aspect of a doom ;
But in the mould of mercy all is cast
For Souls familiar with the eternal Voice.
And this forgotten Taper to the last
Drove from itself, we trust, all frightful
gloom.

XVII

TO THE PLANET VENUS, AN EVENING
STAR

COMPOSED AT LOCH LOMOND

Though joy attend Thee orient at the
birth

Of dawn, it cheers the lofty spirit most
To watch thy course when Day-light
fled from earth,

In the grey sky hath left his lingering
Ghost.

Perplexed as if between a splendour lost
And splendour slowly mustering. Since
the Sun,

The absolute, the world-absorbing One,

¹ How much the Broach is sometimes prized
by persons in humble stations may be gathered
from an occurrence mentioned to me by a female
friend. She had had an opportunity of bene-
fitting a poor old woman in her own hut, who
wishing to make a return, said to her daughter
in Erse, in a tone of plaintive earnestness, "I
would give anything I have, but I hope she
does not wish for my Broach!" and, uttering
these words, she put her hand upon the Broach
which fastened her kerchief, and which, she
imagined, had attracted the eye of her benefac-
tress.

Relinquished half his empire to the host
Emboldened by thy guidance, holy Star,
Holy as princely, who that looks on thee
Touching, as now, in thy humility
The mountain borders of this seat of
care,
Can question that thy countenance is
bright,
Celestial Power, as much with love as
light?

XVIII

BOTHWELL CASTLE
(PASSED UNSKEN ON ACCOUNT OF STORMY
WEATHER)

IMMURED in Bothwell's towers, at times
the Brave
(So beautiful is Clyde) forgot to mourn
The liberty they lost at Bannockburn.
Once on those steepes I roamed at large,
and have
In mind the landscape, as if still in sight;
The river glides, the woods before me
wave;
Then why fepine that now, in vain I
crave
Needless renewal of an old delight?
Better to thank a dear and long-past
day
For joy its sunny hours were free to give
Than blame the present, that our wish
hath crost.
Memory, like sleep, hath powers which
dreams obey,
Dreams, vivid dreams, that are not
fugitive:
How little that she cherishes is lost!

XIX

PICTURE OF DANIEL IN THE LION'S DEN,
AT HAMILTON PALACE

Amid a fertile region green with wood
And fresh with rivers, well did it become
The ducal Owner, in his palace-home
To naturalise this tawny Lion brood:
Children of Art, that claim strange
brotherhood
(Couched in their den) with those that
roam at large
Over the burning wilderness, and charge
The wind with terror while they roar for
food.
Satiated are these; and still to eye and
ear:
Hence, while we gaze, a more enduring
fear!
Yet is the Prophet calm, nor would the
cave
Daunt him—if his Companions, now be-
drowned
Outstretched and listless, were by hunger
roused.

Man placed him here, and God, he knows,
can save.

XX

THE AVON

A FEEDER OF THE ANNAN

AVON—a precious, an immortal name!
Yet is it one that other rivulets bear
Like this unheard-of, and their channels
wear
Like this contented, though unknown to
Fame:
For great and sacred is the modest claim
Of Streams to Nature's love, where'er
they flow;
And ne'er did Genius slight them, as they
go,
Tree, flower, and green herb, feeding
without blame.
But Praise can waste her voice on work of
tears,
Anguish, and death: full oft where inno-
cent blood
Has mixed its current with the limpid
flood.
Her heaven-offending trophies Glory
rears:
Never for like distinction may the good
Shrink from thy name, pure Rill, with
unpleased ears.

XXI

SUGGESTED BY A VIEW FROM AN EMI-
NENCE IN INGLEWOOD FOREST

The forest huge of ancient Caledon
Is but a name, no more is Inglewood,
That swept from hill to hill, from flood
to flood:
On her last thorn the mighty moon has
shone;
Yet still, though inappropriate Wild be
none.
Fair parks spread wide where Adam
Bell might deign
With Clym o' the Clough, were they alive
again,
To kill for merry feast their venison.
Nor wants the holy Abbot's gliding
Shade
His church with monumental wreck
bestrown:
The feudal Warrior-chief, a Ghost un-
laid,
Hath still his castle, though a skeleton,
That he may watch by night, and lessons
con
Of power that perishes, and rights that
fade.

XXII

HART'S-HORN TREE, NEAR PENRITH

HERE stood an Oak, that long had borne
amid

To his huge trunk, or, with more subtle
art, [mixed,
Among its withering topmost branches
The palmy antlers of a hunted Hart,
Whom the Dog Hercules pursued—his
part
Each desperately sustaining, till at last
Both sank and died, the life-veins of the
chased
And chaser bursting here with one dirge
smart.
Mutual the victory, mutual the defeat!
High was the trophy hung with pitiless
pride; [pathy
Say, rather, with that generous sym-
That wants not, even in rudest breasts,
a seat; [chide
And, for this feeling's sake, let no one
Verse that would guard thy memory,
HART'S-HORN TREE !¹

XXIII

FANCY AND TRADITION

THE Lovers took within this ancient
grove
Their last embrace; beside those crystal
springs
The Hermit saw the Angel spread his
wings
For instant flight; the Sage in yon alcove
Sat musing; on that hill the Bard would
rove,
Not mute where now the linnet only
sings:
Thus every where to truth Tradition
clings,
Or Fancy localises Powers we love.
Were only History licensed to take note
Of things gone by, her meagre monuments
Would ill suffice for persons and events:
There is an ampler page for man to quote,
A reader book of manifold contents,
Studied alike in palace and in cot.

XXIV

COUNTESS' PILLAR

[On the roadside between Penrith and Appleby,
there stands a pillar with the following in-
scription:—

"This pillar was erected, in the year 1656,
by Anne, Countess Dowager of Pembroke, etc.
for a memorial of her last parting with her
pious mother, Margaret, Countess Dowager
of Cumberland, on the 2d of April, 1616; in
memory whereof she hath left an annuity of
4*l*. to be distributed to the poor of the parish
of Brougham, every 2d day of April for ever,
upon the stone table placed hard by. *Laus
Deo!*"

WHILE the Poor gather round, till the
end of time

May this bright flower of Charity display
Its bloom, unfolding at the appointed
day;

¹ See Note.

Flower than the loveliest of the vernal
prime
Lovelier—transplanted from heaven's
purest clime!
"Charity never faileth:" on that creed,
More than on written testament or deed,
The pious Lady built with hope sublime.
Alms on this stone to be dealt out, *for
ever!*
"LAUS DEO." Many a Stranger passing
by
Has with that Parting mixed a filial
sigh,
Blest its humane Memorial's fond en-
deavour;
And, fastening on those lines an eye
tear-glazed,
Has ended, though no Clerk, with "God
be praised!"

XXV

ROMAN ANTIQUITIES

(FROM THE ROMAN STATION AT OLD
PENRITH)

How profitless the relics that we cull,
Troubling the last holds of ambitious
Rome,
Unless they chasten fancies that pre-
sume
Too high, or idle agitations kill!
Of the world's flatteries if the brain
be full,
To have no seat for thought were better
doom,
Like this old helmet, or the eyeless skull
Of him who gloried in its nodding plume.
Heaven out of view, our wishes what
are they?
Our fond regrets tenacious in their grasp?
The Sage's theory? the Poet's lay?—
Mere Fibula without a robe to clasp;
Obsolete lamps, whose light no time
recalls;
Urns without ashes, tearless lacrymals!

XXVI

APOLOGY

FOR THE FOREGOING POEMS

No more: the end is sudden and abrupt,
Abrupt—as without preconceived design
Was the beginning; yet the several Lays
Have moved in order, to each other
bound

By a continuous and acknowledged tie
Though unapparent—like those Shapes
distinct

That yet survive ensculptured on the
walls

Of palaces, or temples, 'mid the wreck
Of famed Persepolis; each following each,
As might besem a stately embassy,
In set array; these bearing in their
hands

Ensign of civil power, weapon of war,
 Or gift to be presented at the throne
 Of the Great King; and others, as they
 go
 In priestly vest, with holy offerings
 charged,
 Or leading victims drest for sacrifice.
 Nor will the Power we serve, that sacred
 Power,
 The Spirit of humanity, disdain
 A ministration humble but sincere,
 That from a threshold loved by every
 Muse
 Its impulse took—that sorrow-stricken
 door,
 Whence, as a current from its fountain
 head,
 Our thoughts have issued, and our feel-
 ings flowed,
 Receiving, willingly or not, fresh strength

From kindred sources; while around us
 sighed
 (Life's three first seasons having passed
 away)
 Leaf-scattering winds; and hoar-frost
 sprinkling fell
 (Foretaste of winter) on the moorland
 heights,
 And every day brought with it tidings new
 Of rash change, ominous for the public
 weal.
 Hence, if dejection has too oft encroached,
 Upon that sweet and tender melancholy
 Which may itself be cherished and
 caressed
 More than enough; a fault so natural
 (Even with the young, the hopeful, or the
 gay)
 For prompt forgiveness will not sue in
 vain.

EVENING VOLUNTARIES

I

CALM is the fragrant air, and loth to lose
 Day's grateful warmth, the moist with
 falling dews.
 Look for the stars, you'll say that there
 Look up a second time, and, one by one,
 You mark them twinkling out with
 silvery light,
 And wonder how they could elude the
 sight!
 The birds, of late so noisy in their
 bowers,
 Warbled a while with faint and fainter
 powers,
 But now are silent as the dim-seen
 flowers:
 Nor does the village Church-clock's iron
 tone
 The time's and season's influence dis-
 own;
 Nine beats distinctly to each other bound
 In drowsy sequence—how unlike the
 sound
 That, in rough winter, oft inflicts a fear
 On fireside listeners, doubting what they
 hear!
 The shepherd, bent on rising with the sun,
 Had closed his door, before the day was
 done,
 And now with thankful heart to bed doth
 creep,
 And joins his little children in their
 sleep.
 The bat, lured forth where trees the lane
 o'er shade,
 Flits and redits along the close arcade;

The busy dor-hawk chases the white
 moth
 With burring note, which Industry and
 Sloth
 Might both be pleased with, for it suits
 them both.
 A stream is heard—I see it not, but
 know
 By its soft music whence the waters flow:
 Wheels and the tread of hoofs are heard
 no more;
 One boat there was, but it will touch the
 shore
 With the next dipping of its slackened
 Faint sound, that, for the gayest of the
 gay,
 Might give to serious thought a moment's
 sway,
 As a last token of man's toilsome day!
 1832.

II

ON A HIGH PART OF THE COAST OF
CUMBERLAND

EASTER SUNDAY, APRIL 7

THE AUTHOR'S SIXTY-THIRD BIRTH-DAY
 THE Sun, that seemed so mildly to retire,
 Flung back from distant climes a stream
 ing fire,
 Whose blaze is now subdued to tender
 gleams,
 Prelude of night's approach with sooth-
 ing dreams.
 Look round;—of all the clouds not one
 is moving;
 'Tis the still hour of thinking, feeling,
 loving.

Silent, and-stedfast as the vaulted sky,
The boundless plain of waters seems to
lie :—
Comes that low sound from breezes rust-
ling o'er
The grass-crowned headland that con-
ceals the shore ?
No ; 'tis the earth-voice of the mighty
sea,
Whispering how meek and gentle he can
be !

* Thou Power supreme ! who, anjning to
rebuke
* Offenders, dost put off the gracious look,
And clothe thyself with terrors like the
flood
Of ocean roused into his fiercest mood,
Whatever discipline thy Will ordain
For the brief course that must for me
remain ;
Teach me with quick-eared spirit to re-
joice
In admonitions of thy softest voice !
Whate'er the path these mortal feet may
trace,
Breathe through my soul the blessing of
thy grace,
Glad, through a perfect love, a faith
sincere
Drawn from the wisdom that begins
with fear,
Glad to expand ; and, for a season, free
From finite cares, to rest absorbed in
Thee !

III

1833.

(BY THE SEA-SIDE)

THE sun is couched, the sea-fowl gone to
rest,
And the wild storm hath somewhere
found a nest ;
Air slumbers—wave with wave no longer
strives,
Only a heaving of the deep survives,
A tell-tale motion ! soon will it be laid,
And by the tide alone the water swayed.
Stealthy withdrawals, interminglings
mild
Of light with shade in beauty reconciled—
Such is the prospect far as sight can range,
The soothing recompence, the welcome
change.
Where now the ships that drove before
the blast,
Threatened by angry breakers as they
passed ;
And by a train of flying clouds be-
mocked :
Or, in the hollow surge, at anchor rocked
As on a bed of death ? Some lodge in
peace,
Saved by His care who bade the tempest
cease ;

And some, too heedless of past danger,
court

Fresh gales to wait them to the far-off
port ;

But near, or hanging sea and sky between,
Not one of all those winged powers is
seen,

Seen in her course, nor 'mid this quiet
heard ;

Yet oh ! how gladly would the air, be
stirred

By some acknowledgment of thanks and
praise,

Soft in its temper as those vesper lays
Sung to the Virgin while accordant oars

Urge the slow bark along Calabrian
shores ;

A sea-born service through the moun-
tains felt

Till into one loved vision all things melt :
Or like those hymns that soothe with
graver sound

The gulfy coast of Norway iron-bound ;
And, from the wide and open Baltic,

rise
With punctual care, Lutheran har-
monies.

Hush, not a voice is here ! but why repine.
Now when the star of eve comes forth to
shine

On British waters with that look be-
nign ?

Ye mariners, that plough your onward
way,

Or in the haven rest, or sheltering bay,
May silent thanks at least to God be given

With a full heart ; " our thoughts are
heard in heaven ! "

1833.

IV

Nor in the lucid intervals of life

That come but as a curse to party strife ;
Not in some hour when Pleasure with a
sigh

Of languor puts his rosy garland by ;
Not in the breathing-times of that poor
slave

Who daily piles up wealth in Mammon's
cave—

Is Nature felt, or can be ; nor do words,
Which practised talent readily affords,

Prove that her hand has touched respon-
sive chords ;

Nor has her gentle Beauty power to move
With genuine rapture and with fervent
love

The soul of Genius, if he dare to take
Life's rule from passion craved for pas-
sion's sake :

Untaught that meekness is the cherished
bent

Of all the truly great and all the inno-
cent.

But who is innocent? By grace divine,
 Not otherwise, O Nature! we are thine,
 Through good and evil thine, in just degree
 Of rational and manly sympathy.
 To all that Earth from pensive hearts is stealing,
 And Heaven is now to gladdened eyes revealing,
 Add every charm the Universe can show
 Through every change its aspects undergo—
 Care may be respited, but not repealed;
 No perfect cure grows on that bounded field.
 Vain is the pleasure, a false calm the peace,
 If He, through whom alone our conflicts cease,
 Our virtuous hopes without relapse advance,
 Come not to speed the Soul's deliverance;
 To the distempered Intellect refuse
 His gracious help, or give what we abuse.

1834.

(BY THE SIDE OF RYDAL MERE)

The linnet's warble, sinking towards a close,
 Hints to the thrush 'tis time for their repose;
 The shrill-voiced thrush is heedless, and again
 The monitor revives his own sweet strain;
 But both will soon be mastered, and the copse
 Be left as silent as the mountain-tops,
 Ere some commanding star dismiss to rest
 The throng of rocks, that now, from twig or nest,
 (After a steady flight on home-bound wings,
 And a last game of mazy hoverings
 Around their ancient grove) with cawing noise
 Disturb the liquid music's equipoise.
 O Nightingale! Who ever heard thy song
 Might here be moved, till Fancy grows so strong
 That listening sense is pardonably cheated
 Where wood or stream by thee was never greeted.
 Surely, from fairest spots of favoured lands,
 Were not some gifts withheld by jealous hands.

This hour of deepening darkness here
 would be
 As a fresh morning for new harmony:
 And lays as prompt would hail the dawn
 of Night:
 A dawn she has both beautiful and bright,
 When the East kindles with the full moon's light;
 Not like the rising sun's impatient glow
 Dazzling the mountains, but an overflow
 Of solemn splendour, in mutation slow.

Wanderer by spring with gradual progress led,
 For sway profoundly felt as widely spread;
 To king, to peasant, to rough sailor, dear,
 And to the soldier's trumpet-wearied ear;
 How welcome wouldst thou be to this green Vale
 Fairer than Tempe! Yet, sweet Nightingale!
 From the warm breeze that bears thee on, alight
 At will, and stay thy migratory flight;
 Build, at thy choice, or sing, by pool or fount,
 Who shall complain, or call thee to account?
 The wisest, happiest, of our kind are they
 That ever walk content with Nature's way,
 God's goodness—measuring bounty as it may;
 For whom the gravest thought of what they miss,
 Chastening the fulness of a present bliss,
 Is with that wholesome office satisfied,
 While unrepining sadness is allied
 In thankful bosoms to a modest pride.

1834.

VI

Soft as a cloud is yon blue Ridge—the Mere
 Seems firm as solid crystal, breathless, clear,
 And motionless; and, to the gazer's eye,
 Deeper than ocean, in the immensity
 Of its vague mountains and unreal sky!
 But, from the process in that still retreat,
 Turn to minuter changes at our feet:
 Observe how dewy Twilight has withdrawn
 The crowd of daisies from the shaven lawn,
 And has restored to view its tender green,
 That, while the sun rode high, was lost
 beneath their dazzling sheen.

—An emblem this of what the sober Hour
Can do for minds disposed to feel its
power
Thus oft, when we in vain have wish'd
away
The petty pleasures of the garish day,
Meek eve shuts up the whole usurping
host
(Unbashful dwarfs each glittering at his
post)
And leaves the disencumbered spirit
free
To reassume a staid simplicity
'Tis well—but what are helps of time
and place.
When wisdom stands in need of nature's
grace,
Why do good thoughts, invoked or not,
descend,
Like Angels from their bowers, our virtues
to befriend
If yet To-morrow, unbefield, may say,
"I come to open out, for fresh display,
The elastic vanities of yesterday,"

1834

VII

THE leaves that rustled on this oak-
crowned hill,
And sky that danced among those leaves,
are still,
Rest smooths the way for sleep, in field
and bower
Soft shades and dews have shed their
blended power
On drooping eyelid and the closing
flower,
Sound is there none at which the faintest
heart
Might leap, the weakest nerve of super-
stition start,
Save when the Owl's unexpected
scream
Pierces the ethereal vault, and (rud the
gleam
Of unsubstantial imagery, the dream,
From the hushed vale's realities, trans-
ferred
To the still lake) the imaginative Bird
Seems, 'mid inverted mountains, not
unheard

Grave Creature!—whether, while the
moon shines bright
On thy wings opened wide for smoothest
flight,
Thou art discovered in a roofless tower,
Rising from what may once have been a
lady's bower;
Or spied where thou sitt'st moping in thy
mew
At the dim centre of a churchyard yew;
Or, from a rifted crag or ivy tod

Deep in a forest, thy secure abode,
Thou giv'st for pastime's sake, by
shriek or shout,
A puzzling notice of thy whereabouts—
May the night never come, nor day be
seen,
When I shall scorn thy voice or mock thy
mien

In classic ages men perceived a soul
Of sapience in thy aspect, headless Owl!
Thee Athens revered in the studious
grove,
And, near the golden sceptre grasped by
Iove,
His Eagle's favourite perch, while round
him sate
The Gods revolving the decrees of Fate,
Thou, too, wert present at Minerva's
side—
Hark to that second larum!—far and
wide
The elements have heard, and rock and
cave replied

1834

VIII

[This *Impromptu* appeared, many years ago,
among the Author's poems from which in
subsequent editions it was excluded. It is
reprinted at the request of the Friend in whose
presence the lines were thrown off]

THE sun has long been set,
The stars are out by twos and threes,
The little birds are piping yet
Among the bushes and trees;
There's a cuckoo, and one or two
thrushes,
And a far-off wind that rushes,
And a sound of water that gushes,
And the cuckoo's sovereign cry
Fills all the hollow of the sky.
Who would "go parading"
In London, "and masquerading,"
On such a night of June
With that beautiful soft half-moon,
And all these innocent blisses?
On such a night as this is!

1804.

IX

COMPOSED UPON AN EVENING OF EXTRA-
ORDINARY SPLENDOUR AND BEAUTY

I

HAD this effulgence disappeared
With flying haste, I might have sent,
Among the speechless clouds, a look
Of blank astonishment;
But 'tis endued with power to stay,
And sanctify one closing day,
That frail Mortality may see—
What is?—ah no, but what *can* be!
Time was when field and watery cove
With modulated echoes rang.

While choirs of fervent Angels sang
 Their vespers in the grove ;
 Or, crowning, star-like, each some sover-
 eign height,
 Warbled, for heaven above and earth
 below,
 Strains suitable to both.—Such holy
 nie,
 Methinks, if audibly repeated now
 From hill or valley, could not move
 Sublimier transport, purer love,
 Than doth this silent spectacle—the
 gleam—
 The shadow—and the peace supreme !

No sound is uttered,—but a deep
 And solemn harmony pervades
 The hollow vale from steep to steep,
 And penetrates the glades.
 Far-distant images draw nigh,
 Called forth by wondrous potency
 Of beamy radiance, that imbues,
 Whate'er it strikes, with gem-like hues,
 In vision exquisitely clear,
 Herds range along the mountain side ;
 And glistening antlers are descried ;
 And gilded flocks appear.
 Thine is the tranquil hour, purpleal
 Eve !

But long as god-like wish, or hope divine,
 Informs my spirit, ne'er can I believe
 That this magnificence is wholly thine !
 —From worlds not quickened by the sun
 A portion of the gift is won ;
 An intermingling of Heaven's pomp is
 spread
 On ground which British shepherds
 tread !

And, if there be whom broken ties
 Afflict, or injuries assail,
 Yon hazy ridges to their eyes
 Present a glorious scale,
 Climbing suffused with sunny air,
 To stop—no record hath told where !
 And tempting Fancy to ascend,
 And with immortal Spirits blend !
 —Wings at my shoulders seem to play ;
 But, rooted here, I stand and gaze
 On those bright steps that heaven-ward
 raise
 Their practicable way.
 Come forth, ye drooping old men, look
 abroad,
 And see to what fair countries ye are
 bound !
 And if some traveller, weary of his road,
 Hath slept since noon-tide on the grassy
 ground,
 Ye Gent ! to his covert speed ;
 And wake him with such gentle heed
 As may attune his soul to meet the dower
 Bestowed on the tranquil hour !

Such hues from their celestial Urn
 Were wont to stream before mine eye,
 Where'er it wandered in the morn
 Of blissful infancy.
 This glimpse of glory, why renewed ?
 Nay, rather speak with gratitude ;
 For, if a vestige of those gleams
 Survived, 'twas only in my dreams.
 Dread Power ! whom peace and calmness
 serve
 No less than Nature's threatening voice,
 If aught unworthy be my choice,
 From THEE if I would swerve ;
 Oh, let thy grace remind me of the light
 Full early lost, and fruitlessly deplored ;
 Which, at this moment, on my waking
 sight
 Appears to shine, by miracle restored ;
 My soul, though yet confined to earth,
 Rejoices in a second birth !
 —'Tis past, the visionary splendour
 fades ;
 And night approaches with her shades.

1818.

Note.—The multiplication of mountain-ridges
 described at the commencement of the third
 Stanza of this Ode, as a kind of Jacob's Ladder,
 leading to Heaven, is produced either by watery
 vapours, or sunny haze ;—in the present in-
 stance by the latter cause. Allusions to the
 Ode, entitled "Intimations of Immortality,"
 pervade the last stanza of the foregoing Poem.

X

COMPOSED BY THE SEA-SHORE

WHAT mischief cleaves to unsubdued
 regret,
 How fancy sickens by vague hopes
 beset ;
 How baffled projects on the spirit prey,
 And fruitless wishes eat the heart away,
 The Sailor knows ; he best, whose lot is
 cast
 On the relentless sea that holds him fast
 On chance dependent, and the fickle star
 Of power, through long and melancholy
 war.
 O sad it is, in sight of foreign shores,
 Daily to think on old familiar doors,
 Hearths loved in childhood, and ances-
 tral floors ;
 Or, tossed about along a waste of foam,
 To ruminate on that delightful home
 Which with the dear Betrothed was to
 come ;
 Or came and was and is, yet meets the
 eye
 Never but in the world of memory ;
 Or in a dream recalled, whose smoothest
 range
 Is crossed by knowledge, or by dread, of
 change.

And if not so, whose perfect joy makes sleep

A thing too bright for breathing man to keep

Hail to the virtues which that perilous life

Extracts from Nature's elemental strife,
And welcome glory won in battle fought
As bravely as the foe was keenly sought
But to each gallant Captain and his crew
A less imperious sympathy is due
Such as my verse now yields, while moon-beams play

On the mute sea in this unruffled bay
Such as will promptly flow from every breast

Where good men disappointed in the quest

Of wealth and power and honours, long for rest,

Or, having known the splendours of success,

Sigh for the obscurities of happiness

XL

THE Crescent-moon, the Star of Love,
Glories of evening, as we there are seen
With but a span of sky between—
Speak one of you my doubts remove,
Which is the attendant Page and which the Queen?

XLII

TO THE MOON

(COMPOSED BY THE SEA-SIDE,—ON THE COAST OF CUMBERLAND)

'WANDERER' that stoop'st so low, and com'st so near

To human life's unsettled atmosphere,
Who lovest with Night and Silence to partake,

So might it seem, the cares of them that wake,

And, through the cottage lattice softly peeping,

Dost shield from harm the humblest of the sleeping,

What pleasure once encompassed those sweet names

Which yet in thy behalf the Poet claims,
An idolizing dreamer as of yore—

I slight them all, and, on this sea-beat shore

Sole sitting, only can to thoughts attend
That bid me hail thee as the SAILOR'S FRIEND,

So call thee for heaven's grace through their made known

By confidence supplied and mercy shown,

When not a twinkling star or beacon's light

Abates the perils of a stormy night,

And for less obvious benefits, that find
Their way, with thy pure help, to heart and mind,

Both for the adventurer starting in life's prime

And veteran ranging round from clime to clime,

Long baffled hope's slow fever in his veins,

And wounds and weakness oft his labour's sole remains

The aspiring Mountains and the winding Streams,

Empress of Night are gladdened by thy beams,

A look of thine the wilderness pervades,
And penetrates the forest's inmost shades,

Thou, chequering peaceably the sun-streaks gloom,

Guid'st the pale Mourner to the lost one's tomb

Cap'st reach the Prisoner—to his grated cell

Welcome though silent and untaught

And lives there one, of all that come and go

On the great waters toiling to and fro,
One who has watched thee at some quiet hour

Enthroned aloft in undisputed power,
Or crossed by vapour streaks and clouds that move

Catching the lustre they in part reprove—
Nor sometimes felt a fitness in thy sway

To call up thoughts that shun the glare of day,

And make the serious happier than the gay?

Yes, lovely Moon! if thou so mildly bright

Dost rouse, yet surely in thy own despite,
To fiercer mood the phrenzy-stricken brain,

Let me a compensating faith maintain;
That there's a sensitive, a tender, part

Which thou canst touch in every human heart,

For healing and composure—But, as least

And mightiest billows ever have confessed

Thy domination; as the whole vast Sea
Feels through her lowest depths thy sovereignty,

So shines that countenance with especial grace

On them who urge the keel her plains to trace

Furrowing its way right onward. The moon-trace

On the sea's face

Is the moon-trace

Cut off from home and country, may
have stood—
Even till long gazing hath bedimmed his
eye,
Or the mute rapture ended in a sigh—
Touched by accordance of thy placid
cheer,
With some internal lights to memory
dear,
Or fancies stealing forth to soothe the
breast
Tired with its daily share of earth's
unrest,—
Gentle awakenings, visitations meek;
A kindly influence whereof few will
speak,
Though it can wet with tears the hardi-
est cheek.

And when thy beauty in the shadowy
cave
Is hidden, buried in its monthly grave;
Then, while the Sailor, mid an open sea
Swept by a favouring wind that leaves
thought free,
Paces the deck—no star perhaps in sight,
And nothing save the moving ship's own
light
To cheer the long dark hours of vacant
night—
Oft with his musings does thy image
blend,
In his mind's eye thy crescent horns
ascend,
And thou art still, O Moon, that SAILOR'S
FRIEND!

1835.

KIII
TO THE MOON
(RYDAL)

QUEEN of the stars!—so gentle, so be-
nign,
That ancient Fable did to thee assign,
When darkness creeping o'er thy silver
brow
Warned thee these upper regions to
forego,
Alternate empire in the shades below—
A Bard, who, lately near the wide-spread
sea
Traversed by gleaming ships, looked up
to thee
With grateful thoughts, doth now thy
rising hail
From the close confines of a shadowy
vale
Glory of night, conspicuous yet serene,
Nor less attractive when by glimpses
seen
Through cloudy umbrage, well might
that fair face,
And all those attributes of modest grace,

In days when Fancy wrought unchecked
by fear,
Down to the green earth fetch thee from
thy sphere,
To sit in leafy woods by mountains clear!

O still below'd (for thine, meek Power,
are charms
That fascinate the very Babe in arms
While he, uplifted towards thee, laughs
outright,
Spreading his little palms in his glad
Mother's sight)
O still below'd, once worshipp'd! Time,
that frowns
In his destructive flight on earthly
crowns,
Spare thy mild splendour; still those
far-shot beams
Tremble on dancing waves and rippling
streams
With stainless touch, as chaste as when
thy praise
Was sung by Virgin-choirs in festal lays;
And through dark trials still dost thou
explore
Thy way for increase punctual as of yore,
When teeming Matrons—yielding to
rude faith
In mysteries of birth and life and death
And painful struggle and deliverance—
prayed
Of thee to visit them with lenient aid.
What though the rites be swept away,
the fanes
Extinct that choiced to the votive strains;
Yet thy mild aspect does not, cannot,
cease
Love to promote and purity and peace;
And Fancy, unproved, even yet may
trace
Faint types of suffering in thy beamless
face.

Then, silent Monitress! let us—not
blind
To worlds unthought of till the searching
mind
Of Science laid them open to mankind—
Told, also, how the voiceless heavens
declare
God's glory; and acknowledging thy
share
In that blest charge; let us—without
offence
To aught of highest, holiest, influence—
Receive whatever good 'tis given thee to
disperse.
May sage and simple, catching with one
eye
The moral intimations of the sky,
Learn from thy course, where'er their
own, be taken.

"To look on tempests, and be never
shaken ;"
To keep with faithful step the appointed
way
Eclipsing or eclipsed, by night or day,
And from example of thy monthly range

Gently to brook decline and fatal change;
Meek, patient, steadfast, and with loftier
scope,
Than thy revival yields, for gladsome
hope!

1835.

POEMS,

COMPOSED OR SUGGESTED DURING A TOUR, IN THE SUMMER
OF 1833

[Having been prevented by the lateness of the season, in 1831, from visiting Staffa and Iona, the author made these the principal objects of a short tour in the summer of 1833, of which the following series of poems is a Memorial. The course pursued was down the Cumberland river Derwent, and to Whitehaven; thence (by the Isle of Man, where a few days were passed) up the Frith of Clyde to Greenock, then to Oban, Staffa, Iona; and back towards England, by Loch Awe, Inverary, Loch Goll-head, Greenock, and through parts of Renfrewshire, Ayrshire, and Dumfriesshire to Carlisle, and thence up the river Eden, and homewards by Ullswater.]

I

ADIEU, Rydalian Laurels! that have
grown
And spread as if ye knew that days might
come

When ye would shelter in a happy home,
On this fair Mount, a Poet of your own,
One who ne'er ventured for a Delphic
crown

To sue the God; but, haunting your
green shade

All seasons through, is humbly pleased
to braid

Ground-flowers, beneath your guardian-
ship, self sown.

Farewell! no Minstrels now with harp
new-strung

For summer wandering quit their house-
hold bowers;

Yet not for this wants Poesy a tongue
To cheer the Itinerant, on whom she
pours

Her spirit, while he crosses lonely moors,
Or musing sits forsaken halls among.

II

Why should the Enthusiast, journeying
through this Isle

Repine as if his hour were come too late?
Not unprotected in her mouldering state,

Antiquity salutes him with a smile,
Mid fruitful fields that ring with jocund
toil,

And pleasure-grounds where Taste,
refined Co-mate

Of Truth and Beauty, strives to imitate,
Far as she may, primeval Nature's
style.

Fair Land! by Time's parental love
made free,

By Social Order's watchful arms em-
braced;

With unexampled union meet in thee,

For eye and mind, the present and the
past;

With golden prospect for futurity,
If that be revered which ought to last.

III

THEY called Thee MERRY-ENGLAND, in
old time;

A happy people won for thee that name
With easy head in many a distant
clime;

And, spite of change, for me thou keep'st
the same

Endearing title, a responsive chime
To the heart's fond belief; though some
there are

Whose sterner judgments deem that
word a snare

For inattentive Fancy, like the lime
Which foolish birds are caught with.

Can, I ask,
This face of rural beauty be a mask

For discontent, and poverty, and crime;
These spreading towns a cloak for law-
less will?

Forbid it, Heaven!—and MERRY ENG-
LAND still

Shall be thy rightful name, in prose and
rhyme!

IV

TO THE RIVER GRETA, NEAR KESWICK
GRETA, what fearful listening! when
huge stones

Rumble along thy bed, block after
block:

Or, whirling with reiterated shock,
Combat, while darkness aggravates the
groans:

But if thou (like Cocytus from the moans
Heard on his rueful margin) thence wert
named

The Mourner, thy true nature was de-
famed.

And the habitual murmur that atones
For thy worst rage, forgotten Oft as
Spring
Decks, on thy sinuous banks, her thou
sand thrones,
Seats of glad instinct and love's carol
ling,
The concert, for the happy, then may vie
With divinest peals of birth day har-
mony
To a grieved heart, the notes are benisons

V

TO THE RIVER DERWENT

AMONG the mountains were we nursed,
loved Stream!
Thou near the eagle's nest—within brief
sail,
I, of his bold wing floating on the gale,
Where thy deep voice could lull me!
Faint the beam
Of human life when first allowed to
gleam
On mortal notice—Glory of the vale,
Such thy meek outset, with a crown,
though frail,
Kept in perpetual verdure by the steam
Of thy soft breath.—Less id wreath
entwined
Nemesis victor's brow, less bright was
worn,
Meed of some Roman chief—in triumph
borne
With captives chained, and shedding
from his car
The sunset splendours of a finished war
Upon the proud enslavers of mankind!

VI

IN SIGHT OF THE TOWN OF COCKER-
MOUTH

(WHERE THE AUTHOR WAS BORN, AND HIS
FATHER'S REMAINS ARE LAID)

A POINT of life between my Parent's
dust,
And yours, my buried Little ones' am
I,
And to those graves looking habitually
In kindred quiet I repose my trust
Death to the innocent is more than just,
And, to the sinner, mercifully bent,
So may I hope, if truly I repent
And meekly bear the ills which bear,
must
And You, my Offspring' that, do still
remain,
Yet may outstrip me in the appointed
race,
If e'er, through fault of mine, in mutual
pain
We breathed together for a moment's
space,

The wrong, by love provoked, let love
arraign,
And only love keep in your hearts a
place

VII

ADDRESS FROM THE SPIRIT OF COCKER-
MOUTH CASTLE

"Thou look'st upon me, and dost fondly
think,
Poet! that, stricken as both are by years,
We, differing once so much, are now
Compeers,
Prepared, when each has stood his time,
to sink
Into the dust—Lewwhile a sterner link
United us—when thou in boyish play,
Entering my dungeon, didst become a
prey
To soul appalling darkness Not a
blink
Of light was there,—and thus did I,
thy Tutor,
Make thy young thoughts acquainted
with the grave,
While thou wert chasing the wing'd
butterfly
Through my green courts, or climbing,
a bold suitor,
Up to the flowers whose golden progeny
Still round my shattered brow in beauty
wave

VIII

NUN'S WELL, BRIGHAM

The cattle crowding round this beverage,
clear
To slake their thirst, with reckless hoofs
have trod
The encircling turf into a barren clod,
Through which the waters creep, then
disappear,
Born to be lost in Derwent flowing near,
Yet, over the brink, and round the lime-
stone cell
Of the pure spring (they call it the
Nun's Well
Name that first struck by chance my
startled ear)
A tender Spirit broods—the pensive
Shade
Of ritual honours to this Fountain paid
By hooded Votaries with saintly
cheer,
Albeit oft the Virgin-mother mild
Looked down with pity upon eyes be-
guled
Into the shedding of "too soft a tear."

IX

TO A FRIEND

(ON THE BANKS OF THE DERWENT)

PASTOR and Patriot!—at whose bidding
rise

These modest walls, amid a flock that
 need,
 For one who comes to watch them and
 to feed.
 A fixed Abode—keep down presageful
 sighs.
 Threats, which the unthinking only can
 despise,
 Pèrplex the Church; but be thou firm,—
 be true
 To thy first hope, and this good work
 pursue,
 Poor as thou art. A welcome sacrifice
 Dost Thou prepare, whose sign will be
 the smoke
 Of thy new hearth; and sooner shall its
 wreaths,
 Mounting while earth her morning in-
 cense breathes,
 From wandering fiends of air receive a
 yoke,
 And straightway cease to aspire, than
 God disdain
 This humble tribute as ill-timed or vain.

X

MARY QUEEN OF SCOTS

(LANDING AT THE MOUTH OF THE DERWENT,
 WORKINGTON)

DEAR to the Loves, and to the Graces
 vowed,
 The Queen drew back the wimple that
 she wore;
 And to the throng, that on the Cumbrian
 shore
 Her landing hailed, how touchingly she
 bowed!
 And like a Star (that, from a heavy cloud
 Of pine-tree foliage poised in air, forth
 darts,
 When a soft summer gale at evening
 parts
 The gloom that did its loveliness en-
 shroud)
 She smiled; but Time, the old Saturnian
 seer,
 Sighed on the wing as her foot pressed
 the strand,
 With step preclusive to a long array
 Of woes and degradations hand in hand—
 Weeping captivity, and shuddering fear
 Stilled by the ensanguined block of
 Fotheringay!

XI

STANZAS SUGGESTED IN A STEAM-BOAT
 OFF SAINT BEES' HEADS, ON THE
 COAST OF CUMBERLAND

If Life were slumber on a bed of down,
 Toil unimposed, vicissitude unknown,
 Had were our lot: no hunter of the hare
 Exults like him whose javelin from the
 lair

Has roused the lion; no one plucks the
 rose,
 Whose proffered beauty in safe shelter
 blows
 'Mid a trim garden's summer luxuries,
 With joy like his who climbs, on hands
 and knees,
 For some rare plant, yon Headland of St.
 Bees.

This independence upon oar and sail,
 This new indifference to breeze or gale,
 This straight-lined progress, furrowing
 a flat sea,
 And regular as if locked in certainty—
 Depress the hours. Up, Spirit of the
 storm!
 That Courage may find something to
 perform;
 That Fortitude, whose blood disdains to
 freeze
 At Danger's bidding, may confront the
 seas,
 Firm as the towering Headlands of St.
 Bees.

Dread cliff of Baruth? that wild wish
 may sleep,
 Bold as if men and creatures of the Deep
 Breathed the same element; too many
 wrecks
 Have struck thy sides, too many ghastly
 decks
 Hast thou looked down upon, that such
 a thought
 Should here be welcome, and in verse
 enwrought:
 With thy stern aspect better far agrees
 Utterance of thanks that we have past
 with ease,
 As millions thus shall do, the Headlands
 of St. Bees.

Yet, while each useful Art augments her
 store,
 What boots the gain if Nature should
 lose more?
 And Wisdom, as she holds a Christian's
 place
 In man's intelligence sublimed by grace?
 When Bega sought of yore the Cumbrian
 coast,
 Tempestuous winds her holy errand
 cross'd:
 She knelt in prayer—the waves their
 wrath appease;
 And, from her vow well-weighed in
 Heaven's decrees,
 Rose, where she touched the strand, the
 Chantry of St. Bees.

"Cruel of heart were they, bloody of
 hand,"
 Who in these Wilds then struggled for
 command;

The strong were merciless, without hope
 the weak ;
 Till this bright Stranger came, fair as
 day break,
 And as a cresset true that darts its length
 Of beamy lustre from a tower of strength :
 Guiding the mariner through troubled
 seas,
 And cheering oft his peaceful reveries,
 Like the fixed Light that crowns yon
 Headland of St. Bees.

To aid the Votress, miracles believed
 Wrought in men's minds, like miracles
 achieved ;
 So piety took root : and Song might tell
 What humanizing virtues near her cell
 Sprang up, and spread their fragrance
 wide around :

How savage bosoms melted at the sound
 Of gospel-truth enchain'd in harmonies
 Wafted o'er waves, or creeping through
 those trees,
 From her religious Mansion of St. Bees.

When her sweet Voice, that instrument
 of love,
 Was glorified, and took its place, above
 The silent stars, among the angelic quire,
 Her chantry blazed with religious fire,
 And perished utterly ; but her good
 deeds

Had sown the spot, that witnessed them,
 with seeds

Which lay in earth expectant, till a
 breeze

With quickening impulse answered their
 mute pleas,

And lo ! a stately pile, the Abbey of St.
 Bees.

There are the naked clothed, the hungry
 fed ;

And Charity extendeth to the dead
 Her intercessions made for the soul's rest
 Of tardy penitents ; or for the best
 Among the good (when love might else
 have slept,

Sickened, or died) in pious memory kept.
 Thanks to the austere and simple Devo-
 tees,

Who, to that service bound by venial
 fees,

Keep watch before the altars of St. Bees.

Are not, in sooth, their Requiems sacred
 ties

Woven out of passion's sharpest agonies,
 Subdued, composed, and formalized by
 art.

To fix a wiser sorrow in the heart ?
 The prayer for them whose hour is past
 away

Says to the Living, profit while ye may !

A little part, and that the worst, he sees
 Who thinks that priestly cunning holds
 the keys

That best unlock the secrets of St. Bees.

Conscience, the timid being's inmost
 light,

Hope of the dawn and solace of the night,
 Cheers these Recluses with a steady ray
 In many an hour when judgment goes
 astray.

Ah ! scorn not hastily their rule who try
 Earth to despise, and flesh to mortify ;
 Consume with zeal, in winged ecstasies
 Of prayer and praise forget their rosaries,
 Nor hear the loudest surges of St. Bees.

Yet none so prompt to succour and pro-
 tect

The forlorn traveller, or sailor wrecked
 On the bare coast ; nor do they grudge
 the boon

Which staff and cockle hat and sandal
 shoon

Claim for the pilgrim : and, though child-
 ings sharp

May sometimes greet the strolling min-
 strel's harp,

It is not then when, swept with sportive
 ease,

It charms a feast-day throng of all de-
 grees,

Brightening the archway of revered St.
 Bees.

How did the cliffs and echoing hills rejoice
 What time the Benedictine Brethren's
 voice,

Imploring, or commanding with meet
 pride,

Summoned the Chiefs to lay their feuds
 aside,

And under one blest ensign serve the
 Lord

In Palestine. Advance, indignant Sword !
 Flaming till thou from Paynim hands
 release

That Tomb, dread centre of all sanctities
 Nursed in the quiet Abbey of St. Bees.

But look we now to them whose minds
 from far

Follow the fortunes which they may not
 share.

While in Judea Fancy loves to roam,
 She helps to make a Holy-land at home :

The Star of Bethlehem from its sphere
 invites

To sound the crystal depth of maiden
 rights ;

And wedded Life, through scriptural
 mysteries,

Heavenward ascends with all her char-
 ties,

Taught by the hooded Celibates of St
Bees

Nor be it e'er forgotten how by skill
Of cloistered Architects, free their souls
to fill

With love of God's throughout the Land
were raised

Churches, on whose symbolic beauty
gazed

Peasant and mail-clad Chief with pious
awe,

As at this day men seeing what they saw,
Or the bare wreck of faith's solemnities,

Aspire to more than earthly destinies,
Witness yon Pile that greets us from St
Bees

Yet more, around those Churches,
gathered Towns

Safe from the feudal Castle's haughty
frowns,

Peaceful abodes, where Justice might
uphold

Her scales with even hand, and culture
mould

The heart to pity, train the mind in care
For rules of life, sound as the Time could
bear

Nor dost thou fail, thro' abject love of
ease,

Or hindrance raised by sordid purposes,
To bear thy part in this good work, St
Bees

Who with the ploughshare clove the
barren moors,

And to green meadows changed the
swampy shores?

Thinned the rank woods, and for the
cheerful grange

Made room where wolf and boar were
used to range?

Who taught, and showed by deeds, that
gentler chams

Should bind the vassal to his lord's
domains?

The thoughtful Monks, intent their God
to please,

For Christ's dear sake, by human sym-
pathies

Poured from the bosom of thy Church,
St Bees

But all availed not, by a mandate given
Through lawless will the Brotherhood
was driven

Forth from their cells, their ancient
House laid low

In Reformation's sweeping overthrow
But now once more the local Heart re-
vives,

The inextinguishable Spirit strives
Or may that Power who hushed the

stormy seas,

And cleared a way for the first Votaries,
Prosper the new-born College of St Bees.

Alas! the Genius of our age, from Schools
Less humble, draws her lessons, aims,
and rules

To Prowess guided by her insight keen
Matter and Spirit are as one Machine,

Boastful Idolatress of formal skill
She in her own would merge the eternal
will

Better, if Reason's triumphs match with
these,

Her flight before the bold credulities,
That furthered the first teaching of St,
Bees

1833

XII

IN THE CHANNEL, BETWEEN THE COAST
OF CUMBERLAND AND THE ISLE OF
MAN

RANGING the heights of Scawfell or
Black comb,

In his lone course the Shepherd oft will
pause,

And strive to lathom the mysterious laws
By which the clouds, arrayed in light, or
gloom,

On Mona settle, and the shapes assume
Of all her peaks and ridges What he
draws

From sense, faith, reason, fancy, of the
cause,

He will take with him to the silent tomb.
Or, by his fire, a child upon his knee,

Haply the untaught Philosopher may
speak

Of the strange sight, nor hide his theory
That satisfies the simple and the meek,

Blest in their pious ignorance, though
weak

To cope with Sages undevoutly free

XIII

AT SEA OFF THE ISLE OF MAN

BOLD words affirmed, in days when faith
was strong

And doubts and scruples seldom teased
the brain,

That no adventurer's bark had power to
gain

These shores if he approached them bent
on wrong;

For, suddenly up-conjured from the
Main,

Mists rose to hide the Land—that search,
though long

And eager, might be still pursued in vain.
O Fancy, what an age was that for song!

That age, when not by laws inanimate,
See Excursion, seventh part and Ecclesi-
astical Sketches, second part, near the beginning.

As men believed, the waters were im-
pelled,
The air controlled, the stars their courses
held ?
But element and orb on *acts* did wait
Of Powers, endowed with visible form,
instinct
With will, and to their work by passion
linked

XIV

Desire we past illusions to recal ?
To reinstate wild Fancy, would we hide
Truths whose thick veil Science has
drawn aside ?
No—let this Age, high as she may, inst-
In her esteem the thirst that wrought
man's fall,
The universe is infinitely wide,
And conquering Reason, if self glorifier
Can nowhere move uncrossed by some
new wall
Or gulf of mystery, which thou alone,
Imaginative Faith ! canst overleap,
In progress toward the fount of Life,
the throne
Of Power whose ministers the records
keep
Of periods fixed, and laws established less
Flesh to exalt than prove its nothing-
ness

XV

ENTERING DOUGLAS BAY, ISLE OF
MAN

"Dignum laude virum Musa vetat mori"

THE feudal Keep, the bastions of Cohorn,
Even when they rose to check or to repel
Tides of aggressive war, oft served as
well
Greedy ambition, armed to treat with
scorn
Just limits, but yon Tower, whose
smiles adorn
This perilous bay, stands clear of all
offence ;
Blest work it is of love and innocence,
A Tower of refuge built for the else for-
lorn
Spare it, ye waves, and lift the mariner,
Struggling for life, into its saving arms !
Spare, too, the human helpers ! Do they
stir
'Mid your fierce shock like men afraid to
die ?
No, their dread service nerves the heart
it warms,
And they are led by noble HILLARY !

XVI

BY THE SEA-SHORE, ISLE OF MAN
Why stand we gazing on the sparkling
Brine,

1 See Note.

With wonder smit by its transparency,
And all-enraptured with its purity ?—
Because the unstained, the clear, the
crystalline,
Have ever in them something of benign,
Whether in gem, in water, or in sky,
A sleeping infant's brow, or wakeful eye
Of a young maiden, only not divine
Scarcely the hand forbears to dip its palm
For beverage drawn as from a mountain-
well

Temptation centres in the liquid Calm,
Our daily raiment seems no obstacle
To instantaneous plunging in, deep Sea !
And revelling in long embrace with thee.

XVII

ISLE OF MAN

A YOUTH too certain of his power to
wade
On the smooth bottom of this clear bright
sea,
To sight so shallow, with a bather's glee
Leapt from this rock, and but for timely
aid
He, by the alluring element betrayed,
Had perished Then might Sea nymphs
(and with sighs
Of self reproach) have chanted elegies
Bewailing his sad fate, when he was laid
In peaceful earth for, doubtless, he was
frank,
Utterly in himself devoid of guile,
Knew not the double dealing of a smile,
Nor aught that makes men's promises a
blank,
Or deadly snare and He survives to
bless,
The Power that saved him in his strange
distress

XVIII

ISLE OF MAN

DID pang's of grief for lenient time too
keen,
Grief that devouring waves had caused—
or guilt
Which they had witnessed, sway the
man who built
This Homestead, placed where nothing
could be seen,
Nought heard, of ocean troubled or
serene ?
A tired Ship-soldier on paternal land,
That o'er the channel holds august com-
mand,
The dwelling raised,—a veteran Marine.
He, in disgust, turned from the neigh-
bouring sea
To shun the memory of a listless life

2 The sea-water on the coast of the Isle of
Man is singularly pure and beautiful.

That hung between two callings. May
no strife
More hurtful here beset him, doomed
though free,
Self-doomed, to worse inaction, till his
eye
Shrink from the daily sight of earth and
sky!

XIX

BY A RETIRED MARINER
(A FRIEND OF THE AUTHOR)

FROM early youth I ploughed the restless
Main,
My mind as restless and as apt to change;
Through every clime and ocean did I
range,
In hope at length a competence to gain;
For poor to Sea I went, and poor I still
remain.
Year after year I strove, but strove in
vain,
And hardships manifold did I endure,
For Fortune on me never deign'd to
smile;
Yet I at last a resting-place have found,
With just enough life's comforts to pro-
cure,
In a snug Cove on this our favoured Isle,
A peaceful spot where Nature's gifts
abound;
Then sure I have no reason to complain,
Though poor to Sea I went, and poor I
still remain.

XX

AT BALA-SALA, ISLE OF MAN
(SUPPOSED TO BE WRITTEN BY A FRIEND)

BROKEN in fortune, but in mind entire
And sound in principle, I seek repose
Where ancient trees this convent-pile
enclose,¹
In ruin beautiful. When vain desire
Intrudes on peace, I pray the eternal Sire
To cast a soul-subduing shade on me,
A grey-haired, pensive, thankful Refu-
gee;
A shade—but with some sparks of
heavenly fire
Once to these cells vouchsafed. And
when I note
The old Tower's brow yellowed as with
the beams
Of sunset ever there, albeit streams
Of stormy weather-stains that semblance
wrought,
I thank the silent Monitor, and say
"Shine so, my aged brow, at all hours
of the day!"

¹ Rushen Abbey.

XXI

TYNWALD HILL

ONCE on the top of Tynwald's formal
mound
(Still marked with green turf circles
narrowing
Stage above stage) would sit this Island's
King,
The laws to promulgate, enrobed and
crowned;
While, compassing the little mount
around,
Degrees and Orders stood, each under
each:
Now, like to things within fate's easiest
reach,
The power is merged, the pomp a grave
has found.
Off with yon cloud, old Snafell! that
thine eye
Over three Realms may take its widest
range;
And let, for them, thy fountains utter
strange
Voices, thy winds break forth in prop-
hecy,
If the whole State must suffer mortal
change.
Like Mofa's miniature of sovereignty.

XXII

RESPOND who will—I heard a voice
exclaim,
"Though fierce the assault, and shat-
ter'd the defence,
It cannot be that Britain's social frame,
The glorious work of time and provi-
dence,
Before a flying season's fash pretence,
Should fall; that She, whose virtue put
to shame,
When Europe prostrate lay, the Con-
queror's aim,
Should perish, self-subverted. Black
and dense
The cloud is; but brings that a day of
doom
To Liberty? Her sun is up the while,
That orb whose beams round Saxon
Alfred shone:
Then laugh, ye innocent Wales! ye
Streams, sweep on,
Nor let one billow of our heaven-blest
Isle
Toss in the fanning wind a humbler
plume."

XXIII

IN THE FRITH OF CLYDE, AILSA CRAIG
DURING AN ECLIPSE OF THE SUN, JULY 17
SINCE risen from ocean, ocean to defy,
Appeared the Craig of Ailsa, ne'er did
morn

With gleaming lights more gracefully
adorn
His sides, or wreath with mist his forehead high ;
Now, faintly darkening with the sun's
eclipse,
Still is he seen, In lone sublimity,
Towering above the sea and little ships ;
For dwarfs the tallest seem while sailing
by,
Each for her haven ; with her freight of
Care,
Pleasure, or Grief, and Toil that seldom
looks
Into the secret of to-morrow's fare ;
Though poor, yet rich, without the
wealth of books,
Or aught that watchful Love to Nature
owes
For her mute Powers, fix'd Forms, or
transient Shows.

XXIV

ON THE PATH OF CLYDE

(IN A STEAM-BOAT)

ARRAN ! a single-crested Tieriffie,
A St. Helena next—in shape and hue,
Varying her crowded peaks and ridges
blue ;
Who but must covet a cloud-seat, or skiff
BUILT for the air, or winged Hippogriff ?
That he might fly, where no one could
pursue,
From this dull Monster and her sooty
crew ;
And, as a God, light on thy topmost cliff.
Impotent wish ! which reason would
despise
If the mind knew no union of extremes,
No natural bond between the boldest
schemes
Ambition frames, and heart-humilities.
Beneath stern mountains many a soft
vale lies,
And lofty springs give birth to lowly
streams.

XXV

ON REVISITING DUNOLLY CASTLE

[SEE FORMER SERIES, p. 356]

THE captive Bird was gone ;—to cliff or
moor
Perchance had flown, delivered by the
storm ;
Or he had pined, and sunk to feed the
worm ;
Him found we not : but, climbing a tall
tower,
There saw, impaved with rude fidelity
Of art mosaic, in a roofless floor,
An Eagle with stretched wings, but
beamless eye—

An Eagle that could neither wail nor
soar.
Effigy of the Vanished—(shall I dare
To call thee so ?) or symbol of fierce
deeds
And of the towering courage which past
times
Rejoiced in—take, whate'er thou be, a
share,
Not undeserved, of the memorial rhymes
That animate my way where'er it leads !

XXVI

THE DUNOLLY EAGLE

Nor to the clouds, not to the cliff, he
flew :
But when a storm, on sea or mountain
bred,
Came and delivered him, alone he sped
Into the castle-dungeon's darkest mew.
Now, near his master's house in open
view
He dwells, and hears indignant tempests
howl,
Kennelled and chained. Ye tame do-
mestic fowl,
Beware of him ! Thou, saucy cockatoo,
Look to thy plumage and thy life !—
The roc,
Fleet as the west wind, is for him no
quarry ;
Balanced in ether he will never tarry,
Eyeing the sea's blue depths. Poor
Bird ! even so
Doth man of brother man a creature
make
That clings to slavery for its own sad
sake.

XXVII

WRITTEN IN A BLANK LEAF OF MACPHER-
SON'S OSSIAN

OFt have I caught, upon a fitful breeze,
Fragments of far-off melodies,
With ear not coveting the whole,
A part so charmed the pensive soul :
While a dark storm before my sight
Was yielding, on a mountain height
Loose vapours have I watched, that won
Prismatic colours from the sun ;
Nor felt a wish that heaven would show
The image of its perfect bow.
What need, then, of these finished
Strains ?
Away with counterfeit Remains !
An abbey in its lone recess,
A temple of the wilderness,
Wracks though they be, announce with
feeling
The majesty of honest dealing.
Spirit of Ossian ! if imbound
In language thou may'st yet be found,
If aught intrusted to the pen

Or floating on the tongues of men,
 Albeit shattered and impaired)
 Subsist thy dignity to guard,
 In concert with memorial claim
 Of old grey stone, and high-born name
 That cleaves to rock or pillared cave
 Where moans the blast, or beats the
 wave,

Let Truth, stern arbitress of all,
 Interpret that Original,
 And for presumptuous wrongs atone ;—
 Authentic words be given, or none !

Time is not blind ;—yet He, who spares
 Pyramid pointing to the stars,
 Hath preyed with ruthless appetite
 On all that marked the primal flight
 Of the poetic ecstasv
 Into the land of mystery.
 No tongue is able to rehearse
 One measure, Orpheus ! of thy verse ;
 Musæus, stationed with his lyre
 Supreme among the Elysian quire,
 Is, for the dwellers upon earth,
 Mute as a lark ere morning's birth.
 Why grieve for these, though past away
 The music, and extinct the lay ?
 When thousands, by severer doom,
 Full early to the silent tomb
 Have sunk, at Nature's call ; or straved
 From hope and promise, self-betrayed ;
 The garland withering on their brows ;
 Stung with remorse for broken vows ;
 Frantic—else how might they rejoice ?
 And friendless, by their own sad choice !

Hail, Bards of mightier grasp ! on you
 I chiefly call, the chosen Few,
 Who cast not off the acknowledged guide,
 Who faltered not, nor turned aside ;
 Whose lofty genius could survive
 Privation, under sorrow thrive ;
 In whom the fiery Muse revered
 The symbol of a snow-white beard,
 Bedewed with meditative tears
 Dropped from the lenient cloud of years.

Brothers in soul ! though distant
 times

Produced you nursed in various climes,
 Ye, when the orb of life had waned,
 A plenitude of love retained :
 Hence, while in you each sad regret
 By corresponding hope was met,
 Ye lingered among human kind,
 Sweet voices for the passing wind ;
 Departing sunbeams, loth to stop,
 Though smiling on the last hill top !
 Such to the tender-hearted maid
 Even ere her joys begin to fade ;
 Such, haply, to the rugged chief
 By fortune crushed, or tamed by grief ;
 Appears, on Morven's lonely shore,
 Dim-gleaming through imperfect lore,

The Son of Fingal ; such was blind
 Mæonides of ampler mind ;
 Such Milton, to the fountain head
 Of glory by Urania led !

1824.

XXVIII

CAVE OF STAFFA

We saw, but surely, in the motley crowd,
 Not One of us has felt the far-famed
 sight ;

How *could* we feel it ? each the other's
 blight,

Hurried and hurrying, volatile and loud.
 O for those motpops only that invite
 The Ghost of Fingal to his tuneful Cave
 By the breeze entered, and wave after
 wave

Softly embosoming the timid light !
 And by *one* Votary who at will might
 stand

Gazing and take into his mind and heart,
 With undistracted reverence, the effect
 Of those proportions where the almighty
 hand

That made the worlds, the sovereign
 Architect,
 Has deigned to work as if with human
 Art !

XXIX

CAVE OF STAFFA

AFTER THE CROWD HAD DEPARTED

THANKS for the lessons of this Spot—fit
 school

For the presumptuous thoughts that
 would assign

Mechanic laws to agency divine ;
 And, measuring heaven by earth, would
 overrule

Infinite Power. The pillared vestibule,
 Expanding yet precise, the roof em-
 bowed,

Might seem designed to humble man,
 when proud

Of his best workmanship by plan and
 tool.

Down-bearing with his whole Atlantic
 weight

Of tide and tempest on the Structure's
 base,

And flashing to that Structure's topmost
 height,

Ocean has proved its strength, and of
 its grace

In calms is conscious, standing for his
 freight

Of softest music some responsive place.

XXX

CAVE OF STAFFA

YE shadowy Beings, that have rights and
 claims

In every cell of Fingal's mystic Grot,
Where are ye? Driven or venturing to
the spot,
Our fathers glimpses caught of your thin
Frames,
And, by your mien and bearing, knew
your names;
And they could hear his ghostly song who
trod
Earth, till the flesh lay on him like a load,
While he struck his desolate harp with-
out hopes or aims.
Vanished ye are, but subject to recal:
Why keep we else the instincts whose
dread law
Ruled here of yore, till what men felt
they saw,
Not by black arts but magic natural!
If eyes be still sworn vassals of belief,
Yon light shapes forth a Bard, that shade
a Chief.

XXXI

FLOWERS ON THE TOP OF THE PILLARS
AT THE ENTRANCE OF THE CAVE

Hope shined when your nativity was cast.
Children of Summer! Ye fresh Flowers
that brave
What Summer here escapes not, the
fierce wave,
And whole artillery of the western blast.
Battering the Temple's front, its long-
drawn nave
Smiting, as if each moment were their
last.
But ye, bright Flowers, on frieze and
architrave
Survive, and, once again the Pile stands
fast:
Calm as the Universe, from specular
towers
Of heaven contemplated by Spirits pure
With mute astonishment, it stands sus-
tained
Through every part in symmetry, to
endure,
Unhurt, the assault of Time with all his
hours,
As the supreme Artificer ordained.

XXXII

IONA

On to Iona!—What can she afford
To us save matter for a thoughtful sigh,
Heaved over ruin with stability
In urgent contrast? To diffuse the
Word
(Thy Paramount, mighty Nature! and
Time's Lord)
Her Temples rose, 'mid pagan gloom;
but why,
Even for a moment, has our verse de-
plored

Their wrongs, since they fulfilled their
destiny?
And when, subjected to a common doom
Of mutability, those far-famed Piles
Shall disappear from both the sister Isles,
Iona's Saints, forgetting not past days,
Garlands shall wear of amaranthine
bloom,
While heaven's vast sea of voices chants
their praise.

XXXIII

IONA

(UPON LANDING)

How sad a welcome! To each voyager
Some ragged child holds up for sale a
store
Of wave-worn pebbles, pleading on the
shore
Where once came monk and nun with
gentle stir,
Blessings to give, news ask, or suit pre-
fer.
Yet is yon neat trim church a grateful
speck
Of novelty amid the sacred wreck
Strewn far and wide. Think, proud
Philosopher!
Fallen though she be, this Glory of the
west,
Still on her sons, the beams of mercy
shine;
And "hopes, perhaps more heavenly
bright than thine,
A grace by thee unsought and unpossessed,
A faith more fixed, a rapture more divine
Shall gild their passage to eternal rest."

XXXIV

THE BLACK STONES OF IONA

[SEE MARTIN'S VOYAGE AMONG THE WESTERN
ISLES]

Here on their knees men swore: the
stones were black,
Black in the people's minds and words,
yet they
Were at that time, as now, in colour grey.
But what is colour, if upon the rack
Of conscience souls are placed by deeds
that lack
Concord with oaths? What differ night
and day
Then, when before the Perjured on his
way
Hell opens, and the heavens in vengeance
crack
Above his head uplifted in vain prayer,
To Saint, or Fiend, or to the Godhead
whom
He had insulted—Peasant, King, or
Thane?
Fly where the culprit may, guilt meets
a doom;

And, from invisible worlds at need laid
bare,
Come links for social order's awful chain.

XXXX

HOMeward we turn. Isle of Columba's
Cell,

Where Christian piety's soul-cheering
spark

(Kindled from Heaven between the light
and dark

Of time) shone like the morning-star,
farewell!—

And fare thee well, to Fancy visible,
Remote St. Kilda, lone and loved sea-
mark

For many a voyage made in her swift
bark,

When with more hues than in the rain-
bow dwell

Thou a mysterious intercourse dost hold,
Extracting from clear skies and air
serene,

And out of sun-bright waves, a lucid veil,
That thickens, spreads, and, mingling
fold with fold,

Makes known, when thou no longer
canst be seen,

Thy whereabouts, to warn the approach-
ing sail.

XXXVI

GREENOCK

"Per me si va nella Citta dolente"

We have not passed into a doleful City,
We who were led to-day down a grim dell,
By some too boldly named, "the Jaws of
Hell:"

Where be the wretched ones, the sights
for pity?

These crowded streets resound no plain-
tive ditty:—

As from the hive where bees in sum-
mer dwell, [kneel,

Sorrow seems here excluded; and that
It neither damps the gay, nor checks the
witty.

Alas! too busy Rival of old Tyre,
Whose merchants Princes were, whose
decks were thrones;

Soon may the punctual sea in vain
respire [Clyde

To serve thy need, in union with that
Whose nursing current brawls o'er
mossy stones,

The poor, the lonely, herdsman's joy
and pride.

XXXVII

"THERE!" said a Stripling, pointing
with meet pride

Towards a low roof with green trees half
concealed,

"Is Mosgiel Farm; and that's the very
field

Where Burns ploughed up the Daisy."
Far and wide

A plain below stretched seaward, while,
descried

Above sea-clouds, the Peaks of Arran
rose;

And, by that simple notice, the repose
Of earth, sky, sea, and air, was vivified.

Beneath "the random *bield* of clo' or
stone"

Myriads of daisies have shone forth in
flower

Near the lark's nest, and in their natural
hour

Have passed away; less happy than the
One

That, by the unwilling ploughshare, died
to prove

The tender charin of poetry and love.

XXXVIII

THE RIVER EDEN, CUMBERLAND

EDEN! till now thy beauty had I viewed
By glimpses only, and confess with
shame

That verse of mine, whate'er its varying
mood,

Repeats but once the sound of thy sweet
name:

Yet fetched from Paradise that honour
came,

Rightfully borne; for Nature gives thee
flowers

That have no rivals among British
bowers;

And thy bold rocks are worthy of their
fame.

Measuring thy course, fair Stream! at
length I pay

To my life's neighbour dues of neigh-
bourhood;

But I have traced thee on thy winding
way

With pleasure sometimes by this thought
restrained

For things far off we toil, while many a
good

Not sought, because too near, is never
gained.

XXXIX

MONUMENT OF MRS. HOWARD

(BY NOLLEKENS),

IN WETHERAL CHURCH, NEAR CORBY, ON THE
BANKS OF THE EDEN

STRETCHED ON the dying Mother's lap,
lies dead

Her new-born Babe; dire ending of
bright hope!

But Sculpture here, with the divinest
 scope
 Of luminous faith, heavenward hath
 raised that head
 So patiently; and through one hand has
 spread
 A touch, so fender for the insensate
 Child—
 (Earth's lingering love to parting recon-
 ciled,
 Brief parting, for the spirit is all but
 fled)—
 That we, who contemplate the turns of
 life
 • Through this still medium, are consoled
 and cheered
 • Feel with the Mother, think the severed
 Wife
 Is less to be lamented than revered;
 • And own that Art, triumphant, over
 strife
 And pain, hath powers to Eternity en-
 deared.

XL

SUGGESTED BY THE FOREGOING

• TRANQUILLITY? the sovereign aim wert
 • thou
 In heathen schools of purphic lore:
 Heart-stricken by stern destiny of yore
 The Tragic Muse thee served with
 thoughtful vow;
 • And what of hope Elysium could allow
 Was fondly seized by Sculpture, to
 restore
 Peace to the Mourner. But when He
 who wore
 The crown of thorns around his bleeding
 brow
 Warmed our sad being with celestial
 light,
 • The Arts which still had drawn a soften-
 ing grace
 From shadowy mountains of the Infinite,
 Communed with that Idea face to face:
 And move around it now as planets run,
 Each in its orbit round the central Sun.

XLI

NUNNERY

THE floods are roused, and will not soon
 be weary;
 Down from the Pennine Alps' how
 fiercely sweeps
 CROGLIN, the stately Eden's tributary;
 He raves, or through some moody pas-
 sage creeps
 Plotting new mischief—out again he
 leaps
 Into broad light, and sends, through
 regions airy,

• The chain of Crossfell.

That voice which soothed the Nuns while
 on the steep
 They knelt in prayer, or sang to blissful
 Mary.
 That union ceased: then, cleaving easy
 walks
 Through crags, and smoothing paths
 beset with danger,
 Came studious Taste: and many a pen-
 sive stranger
 Dreams on the banks, and to the river
 talks.
 What change shall happen next to Nun-
 nery Dell?
 Canal, and Viaduct, and Railway, tell!

XLII

STEAMBOATS, VIADUCTS, AND RAILWAYS
 MOTIONS AND MEANS, ON LAND AND SEA AT
 WAR
 With old poetic feeling, not for this,
 Shall ye, by Poets even, be judged
 amiss!
 Nor shall your presence, howsoever it
 mar
 The loveliness of Nature, prove a bar
 To the Mind's gaining that prophetic
 sense
 Of future change, that point of vision,
 whence
 May be discovered what in soul ye are.
 In spite of all that beauty may disown
 In your harsh features, Nature doth
 embrace
 Her lawful offspring in Man's art; and
 Time,
 Pleased with your triumphs o'er his
 brother Space,
 Accepts from your bold hands the proff-
 ered crown
 Of hope, and smiles on you with cheer
 sublime.

XLIII

THE MONUMENT COMMONLY CALLED LONG
 MEG AND HER DAUGHTERS, NEAR THE
 RIVER EDEN

A WEIGHT of awe, not easy to be borne,
 Fell suddenly upon my Spirit—cast
 From the dread bosom of the unknown
 past,
 When first I saw that family forlorn.
 Speak Thou, whose massy strength and
 stature scorn
 The power of years—pre-eminent, and
 placed
 Apart, to overlook the circle vast—
 Speak, Giant-mother! tell it to the Morn
 While she dispels the cumbrous shades
 of Night;
 Let the Moon hear, emerging from a
 cloud;

At whose behest uprose on British ground
That Sisterhood, in hieroglyphic round
Forth-shadowing, some have deemed,
The infinite
The inviolable God, that tames the
proud !¹

XLIV

LOWTHER

LOWTHER*! in thy majestic Pile are seen
Cathedral pomp and grace, in apt accord
With the baronial castle's sterner men ;
Union significant of God adored,
And charters won and guarded by the
sword
Of ancient honour ; whence that goodly
state

Of polity which wise men venerate,
And will maintain, if God his help afford.
Hourly the democratic torrent swells ;
For airy promises and hopes suborned
The strength of backward-looking
thoughts is scorned.
Fall if ye must, ye Towers and Pinnacles,
With what ye symbolise ; authentic
Story
Will say, Ye disappeared with England's
Glory !

XLV

TO THE EARL OF LONSDALE

"Magistratus indicat virum"

LONSDALE ! it were unworthy of a Guest,
Whose heart with gratitude to thee inclines,

If he should speak, by fancy touched, of
signs

On thy Abode harmoniously impress,
Yet be unmoved with wishes to attest
How in thy mind and moral frame agree
Fortitude, and that Christian Charity
Which, filling, consecrates the human
breast.

And if the Motto or thy 'scutcheon teach
With truth, "THE MAGISTRACY SHOWS
THE MAN ;"

That searching test thy public course has
stood ;

As will be owned alike by bad
decks were thronged, and good,
Soon as the measuring of life's little span
Shall place thy virtues out of Envy's
reach.²

XLVI

THE SOMNAMBULIST

List, ye who pass by Lylulph's Tower³
At eve ; how softly then

¹ See Note.

² See Note.

³ A pleasure-house built by the late Duke of Norfolk upon the banks of Ullswater. Force is the word used in the Lake district for Water-fall.

Doth Aira-force, that torrent hoarse,
Speak from the woody glen !
Fit music for a solemn vale !
And holier seems the ground
To him who catches on the gale
The spirit of a mournful tale,
Embodied in the sound

Not far from that fair site whereyn
The Pleasure-house is reared,
As story says, in antique days
A stern-brow'd house appeared ;
Foil to a Jewel rich in light
There set, and guarded well :
Cage for a Bird of plumage bright,
Sweet-voiced, nor wishing for a flight
Beyond her native dell.

To win this bright Bird from her cage,
To make this Gem their own,
Came Barons bold, with store of gold,
And Knights of high renown ;
But one She prized, and only one ;
Sir Eglamore was he :
Full happy season, when was known,
Ye Dales and Hills ! to you alone
Their mutual loyalty—

Known chiefly, Aira ! to thy glen,
Thy brook and bowers of holly ;
Where Passion caught what Nature
taught,

That all but love is folly ;
Where Fact with Fancy stooped to play ;
Doubt came not, nor regret—
To trouble hours that winged their way,
As if through an immortal day
Whose sun could never set.

But in old times Love dwelt not long
Sequester'd with repose ;
Best throve the fire of chaste desire,
Fanned by the breath of foes.
"A conquering lance is beauty's test,
And proves the Love true ;"
So spake Sir Eglamore, and pressed
The drooping Emma to his breast,
And looked a blind adieu.

They parted.—Well with him it fared
Through wide-spread regions errant ;
A knight of proof in love's behoof,
The thirst of fame his warrant :
And She her happiness can build
On woman's quiet hours ;
Though faint, compared with spear and
shield,

The solace beads and masses yield,
And needlework and flowers.

Yet blest was Emma when she heard
Her Champion's praise recounted ;
Though brain would swim, and eyes grow
dim,
And high her blushes mounted ;

Or when a bold heroic lay
 She warbled from full heart ;
 Delightful blossoms for the May
 Of absence ! but they will not stay,
 Born only to depart.

Hope wanes with her, while lustre fills
 Whatever path he chooses ;
 As if his orb, that owns no curb,
 Received the light hers loses.
 He comes not back ; an ampler space
 Requires for nobler deeds ;
 He ranges on from place to place,
 Till of his doings is no trace,
 But what her fancy breeds.

His fame may spread, but in the past
 Her spirit finds its centre ;
 Clear sight She has of what he was,
 And that would now content her.
 " Still is he my devoted Knight ? "
 The tear in answer flows ;
 Month fails on month with heavier
 weight ;

Day sickens round her, and the night
 Is empty of repose.

In sleep She sometimes walked abroad,
 Deep sighs with quick words blending.
 Like that pale Queen, whose hands are
 seen

With fancied spots contending ;
 But she is innocent of blood,—
 The moon is not more pure
 That shines aloft, while through the wood
 She thrills her way, the sounding Flood
 Her melancholy lure !

While 'mid the fern-brake sleeps the doe,
 And owls alone are waking,
 In white arrayed, glides on the Maid
 The downward pathway taking,
 That leads her to the torrent's side
 And to a holly bower ;
 By whom on this still night desried ?
 By whom in that lone place espied ?
 By thee, Sir Eglamore !

A wandering Ghost, so thinks the Knight,
 His coming step has thwarted,
 Beneath the boughs that heard their
 vows,

Within whose shade they parted.
 Hush, hush, the busy Sleeper see !
 Perplexed her fingers seem,
 As if they from the holly tree
 Green twigs would pluck, as rapidly
 Flung from her to the stream.

What means the Spectre ? Why intent
 To violate the Tree,
 Thought Eglamore, by which I swore
 Unfading constancy ?
 Here am I, and to-morrow's sun,
 To her I left, shall prove

That bliss is ne'er so surely won
 As when a circuit has been run
 Of valour, truth, and love.

So from the spot whereon he stood,
 He moved with stealthy pace ;
 And, drawing nigh, with his living eye,
 He recognized the face ;
 And whispers caught, and speeches
 small,

Some to the green-leaved tree,
 Some muttered to the torrent-fall ;—
 " Roar on, and bring him with thy call ;
 I hear, and so may He ! "

Soul-shattered was the Knight, nor knew
 If Emma's Ghost it were,
 Or boding Shade, or if the Maid
 Her very self stood there.

He touched ; what followed who shall tell ?
 The soft touch snapped the thread
 Of slumber—shrieking back she fell,
 And the Stream whirled her down the
 dell
 " Along its foaming bed.

In plunged the Knight !—when on firm
 ground

The rescued Maiden lay,
 Her eyes grew bright with blissful light,
 Confusion passed away ;
 She heard, ere to the throne of grace
 Her faithful Spirit flew,
 His voice—beheld his speaking face ;
 And, dving, from his own embrace,
 She felt that he was true.

So was he reconciled to life :
 Brief words may speak the rest ;
 Within the dell he built a cell,
 And there was Sorrow's guest ;
 In hermits' weeds repose he found,
 From vain temptations free ;
 Beside the torrent dwelling—bound
 By one deep heart-controlling sound,
 And awed to piety.

Wild stream of Aira, hold thy course,
 Nor fear memorial lays,
 Where clouds that spread in solemn
 shade,

Are edged with golden rays !
 Dear art thou to the light of heaven,
 Though minister of sorrow ;
 Sweet is thy voice at pensive even ;
 And thou, in lovers' hearts forgiven,
 Shalt take thy place with Yarrow !
 1833.

XLVII

TO CORDELIA M—
 HALLSTADS, ULLSWATER

Nor in the mines beyond the western
 main,
 You say, Cordelia, was the metal sought,

Which a fine skill, of India's growth, has wrought
 Into this flexible yet faithful Chain ;
 Nor is it silver of romantic Spain
 But from our loved Helvellyn's depths
 was brought,
 Our own domestic mountain. Thing
 and thought
 Mix strangely ; trifles light, and partly
 vain,
 Can prop, as you have learnt, our nobler
 being :
 Yes, Lady, while about your neck is
 wound
 (Your casual glance oft meeting) this
 bright cord,
 What witchery, for pure gifts of inward
 seeing,
 Lurks in it, Memory's Helper, Fancy's
 Lord,
 For precious tremblings in your bosom
 found !

XLVIII

Most sweet it is with unuplifted eyes
 To pace the ground, if path be there or
 none,
 While a fair region round the traveller
 lies
 Which he forbears again to look upon ;
 Pleased rather with some soft ideal
 scene,
 The work of Fancy, or some happy tone
 Of meditation, slipping in between
 The beauty coming and the beauty gone.
 If Thought and Love desert us, from that
 day
 Let us break off all converse with the
 Muse :
 With Thought and Love companions of
 our way,
 Whate'er the senses take or may refuse,
 The Mind's internal heaven shall shed
 her dews
 Of inspiration on the humblest lay.

POEMS OF SENTIMENT AND REFLECTION

I

EXPOSTULATION AND REPLY

"Why, William, on that old grey stone,
 Thus for the length of half a day,
 Why, William, sit you thus alone,
 And dream your time away ?

Where are your books ?—that light
 bequeathed

To Beings else forlorn and blind !
 Up ! up ! and drink the spirit breathed
 From dead men to their kind.

You look round on your Mother Earth,
 As if she for no purpose bore you :
 As if you were her first-born birth,
 And none had lived before you !"

One morning thus, by Esthwaite lake,
 When life was sweet, I knew not why,
 To me my good friend Matthew spake,
 And thus I made reply.

"The eye—it cannot choose but see ;
 We cannot bid the ear be still ;
 Our bodies feel, where'er they be,
 Against or with our will.

Nor less I deem that there are Powers
 Which of themselves our minds impress ;
 That we can feed this mind of ours
 In a wise passiveness.

Think you, 'mid all this mighty sum
 Of things for ever speaking,

That nothing of itself will come,
 But we must still be seeking ?

—Then ask not wherefore, here, alone,
 Conversing as I may,
 I sit upon this old grey stone,
 And dream my time away."

1798.

II

THE TABLES TURNED

AN EVENING SCENE ON THE SAME SUBJECT

Up ! up ! my Friend, and quit your
 books ;

Or surely you'll grow double :
 Up ! up ! my Friend, and clear your
 looks ;

Why all this toil and trouble ?

The sun, above the mountain's head,
 A freshening lustre mellow
 Through all the long green fields has
 spread,

His first sweet evening yellow.

Books ! 'tis a dull and endless strife :
 Come, hear the woodland linnet,
 How sweet his music ! on my life,
 There's more of wisdom in it.

And hark ! how blithe the throstle sings !
 He, too, is no mean preacher :
 Come forth into the light of things,
 Let Nature be your teacher.

She has a world of ready wealth,
Our minds and hearts to bless—
Spontaneous wisdom breathed by health,
Truth breathed by cheerfulness.

One impulse from a vernal wood
May teach you more of man,
Of moral evil and of good,
Than all the sages can.

Sweet is the lore which Nature brings;
Our meddling intellect
Mis-shapes the beauteous forms of
things:—

We murder to dissect.

Enough of Science and of Art;
Close up those barren leaves:
Come forth, and bring with you a heart
That watches and receives.

1798.

III

LINES WRITTEN IN EARLY SPRING

I HEARD a thousand blended notes,
While in a grove I sat reclined,
In that sweet mood when pleasant
thoughts
Bring sad thoughts to the mind.

To her fair works did Nature link
The human soul that through me ran;
And much it grieved my heart to think
What man has made of man.

Through primrose tufts, in that green
bower,

The periwinkle trailed its wreaths;
And 'tis my faith that every flower
Enjoys the air it breathes.

The birds around me hopped and played,
Their thoughts I cannot measure:—
But the least motion which they made,
It seemed a thrill of pleasure.

The budding twigs spread out their fan,
To catch the breezy air,
And I must think, do all I can,
That there was pleasure there.

If this belief from heaven be sent,
If such be Nature's holy plan,
Have I not reason to lament
What man has made of man?

1798.

IV

A CHARACTER

I MARVEL how Nature could ever find
space

For so many strange contrasts in one
human face:

There's thought and no thought, and
there's paleness and bloom

And bustle and sluggishness, pleasure
and gloom.

There's weakness, and strength both
redundant and vain;

Such strength as, if ever affliction and
pain

Could pierce through a temper that's
soft to disease,

Would be rational peace—a philosopher's
case.

There's indifference, alike when he fails
or succeeds.

And attention full ten times as much as
there needs;

Pride where there's no envy, there's so
much of joy;

And mildness, and spirit both forward
and coy.

There's freedom, and sometimes a diffi-
dent stare

Of shame scarcely seeming to know that
she's there,

There's virtue, the title it surely may
claim,

Yet wants heaven knows what to be
worthy the name.

This picture from nature may seem to
depart,

Yet the Man would at once run away
with your heart;

And I for five centuries right gladly
would be

Such an odd such a kind happy creature
as he.

1800.

V

TO MY SISTER

It is the first mild day of March:
Each minute sweeter than before
The redbreast sings from the tall larch
That stands beside our door.

There is a blessing in the air,
Which seems a sense of joy to yield
To the bare trees, and mountains bare,
And grass in the green field.

My sister! ('tis a wish of mine)
Now that our morning meal is done,
Make haste, your morning task resign;
Come forth and feel the sun.

Edward will come with you:—and, pray,
Put on with speed your woodland dress;
And bring no book: for this one day
We'll give to idleness.

No joyless forms shall regulate
Our living calendar:

We from to-day, my Friend, will date
The opening of the year.

Love, now a universal birth;
From heart to heart is stealing,
From earth to man, from man to earth :
—It is the hour of feeling.

One moment now may give us more
Than years of foiling reason :
Our minds shall drink at every pore
The spirit of the season.

Some silent laws our hearts will make,
Which they shall long obey :
We for the year to come may take
Our temper from to-day.

And from the blessed power that rolls
About, below, above,
We'll frame the measure of our souls :
They shall be tuned to love.

Then come, my Sister ! come, I pray,
With speed put on your woodland dress :
And bring no book : for this one day
We'll give to idleness.

1798.

VI

SIMON LEE

THE OLD HUNTSMAN ;
WITH AN INCIDENT IN WHICH HE WAS
CONCERNED

In the sweet shire of Cardigan,
Not far from pleasant Ivor-hall,
An old Man dwells, a little man,—
'Tis said he once was tall.
Full five-and-thirty years he lived
A running huntsman merry :
And still the centre of his cheek
Is red as a ripe cherry.

No man like him the horn could sound,
And hill and valley rang with glee
When Echo banded, round and round,
The halloo of Simon Lee.
In those proud days, he little cared
For husbandry or tillage :
To blither tasks did Simon rouse
The sleepers of the village.

He all the country could outrun,
Could leave both man and horse behind ;
And often, ere the chase was done,
He reeled, and was stone-blind.
And still there's something in the world
At which his heart rejoices ;
For when the chiming hounds are out,
He dearly loves their voices !

But, oh the heavy change !—bereft
Of health, strength, friends, and kindred,
see !

Old Simon to the world is left
In liveried poverty.
His Master's dead—and no one now
Dwells in the Hall of Ivor ;

Men, dogs, and horses, all are dead ;
He is the sole survivor.

And he is lean and he is sick ;
His body, dwindled and awry,
Rests upon ankles swollen and thick ;
His legs are thin and dry.
One prop he has, and only one,
His wife, an aged woman,
Lives with him, near the waterfall,
Upon the village Common.

Beside their moss-grown hut of clay,
Not twenty paces from the door,
A scrap of land they have, but they
Are poorest of the poor.
This scrap of land he from the heath
Enclosed when he was stronger ;
But what to them avails the land
Which he can till no longer ?

Off, working by her Husband's side,
Ruth does what Simon cannot do ;
For she, with scanty cause for pride,
Is stouter of the two.
And, though you with your utmost skill
From labour could not glean them,
'Tis little, very little—all
That they can do between them.

Few months of life has he in store
As he to you will tell,
For still, the more he works, the more
Do his weak ankles swell.
My gentle Reader, I perceive
How patiently you've waited,
And now I fear that you expect
Some tale will be related.

O Reader ! had you in your mind
Such stores as silent thought can bring,
O gentle Reader ! you would find
A tale in everything.
What more I have to say is short,
And you must kindly take it :
It is no tale : but, should you think,
Perhaps a tale you'll make it.

One summer-day I chanced to see
This old Man doing all he could
To unearth the root of an old tree,
A stump of rotten wood.
The mattock tottered in his hand ;
So vain was his endeavour.
That at the root of the old tree
He might have worked for ever.

" You're overtaken, good Simon Lee,
Give me your tool," to him I said ;
And at the word right gladly he
Received my proffered aid.
I struck, and with a single blow
The tangled root I severed,
At which the poor old Man so long
And vainly had endeavoured.

The tears into his eyes were brought,
And thanks and praises seemed to run
So fast out of his heart, I thought
They never would have done.
—I've heard of hearts unkind, kind deeds
With coldness still returning;
Alas! the gratitude of men
Hath oftener left me mourning.

1798.

VII

WRITTEN IN GERMANY

ON ONE OF THE COLDEST DAYS OF THE
CENTURY

The Reader must be apprised, that the Stoves
in North-Germ any generally have the impres-
sion of a galloping horse upon them, this being
part of the Brunswick Arms.

A PLAGUE on your languages, German
and Norse!
Let me have the song of the kettle;
And the tongs and the poker, instead of
that horse

That gallops away with such fury and
force

On this dreary dull plate of black metal.
See that Fly—a disconsolate creature!
perhaps

A child of the field or the grove;
And, sorrow for him! the dull treacherous
heat

Has seduced the poor fool from his winter
retreat,

And he creeps to the edge of my stove.

Alas! how he fumbles about the domains
Which this comfortless oven environ!
He cannot find out in what track he must
crawl,

Now back to the tiles, then in search of
the wall,

And now on the brink of the iron.

Stock-still there he stands like a traveller
benighted:

The best of his skill he has tried;
His feelings, methinks, I can see him put
forth

To the east and the west, to the south
and the north;

But he finds neither guide-post nor guide.

His spindles sink under him, foot, leg,
and thigh!

His eyesight and hearing are lost;
Between life and death his blood freezes
and thaws;

And his two pretty pinions of blue dusky
gauze

Are glued to his sides by the frost.

No brother, no mate has he near him—
while I

Can draw warmth from the cheek of my
Love;

As blest and as glad, in this desolate
gloom,

As if green summer grass were the floor
of my room,

And woodbines were hanging above.

Yet, God is my witness, thou small help-
less Thing!

Thy life I would gladly sustain
Till summer come up from the south, and
with crowds

Of thy brethren a march thou should'st
sound through the clouds,

And back to the forests again!

1799.

VIII

A POET'S EPITAPH

ART thou a Statist in the van
Of public conflicts trained and bred?

—First learn to love one living man;
Then may'st thou think upon the dead.

A Lawyer art thou?—draw not nigh!

Go, carry to some sinner place
The keenness of that practised eye,

The hardness of that fallow face.

Art thou a Man of purple cheer?

A rosy Man, right plump to see?

Approach: yet, Doctor, not too near,
This grave no cushion is for thee.

Or art thou one of gallant pride,

A Soldier and no man of chaff?
Welcome!—but lay thy sword aside,

And lean upon a peasant's staff.

Physician art thou? one, all eyes,

Philosopher! a hugging slave,

One that would peep and botanize

Upon his mother's grave?

Wrapt closely in thy sensual fleece,

Turn aside—and take, I pray,

That he below may rest in peace,

Thy ever-dwindling soul, away!

A Moraliser perchance appears:

Led, Heaven knows how! to this poor
sod:

And he has neither eyes nor ears;

Himself his world, and his own God;

One to whose smooth-rubbed soul can
cling

Nor form, nor feeling, great or small;

A reasoning, self-sufficing thing,

An intellectual All-in-all!

Shut close the door; press down the
latch:

Sleep in thy intellectual crust;

Nor lose ten tickings of thy watch

Near this unprofitable dust.

C C .

But who is He, with modest looks,
And clad in homely russet brown?
He murmurs near the running brooks
A music sweeter than their own.

He is retired as noontide dew,
Or fountain in a noon-day grove;
And you must love him, ere to you
He will seem worthy of your love.

The outward shows of sky and earth,
Of hill and valley, he has viewed;
And impulses of deeper birth
Have come to him in solitude.

In common things that round us lie
Some random truths he can impart,—
The harvest of a quiet eye
That broods and sleeps on his own heart.

But he is weak; both Man and Boy,
Hath been an idler in the laud;
Contented if he might enjoy
The things which others understand.

—Come hither in thy hour of strength;
Come, weak as is a breaking wave!
Here stretch thy body at full length;
Or build thy house upon this grave.

1799.

IX

TO THE DAISY

BRIGHT Flower! whose home is every-
where,
Bold in maternal Nature's care,
And all the long year through the heir
Of joy or sorrow.
Methinks that there abides in thee
Some concord with humanity,
Given to no other flower I see
The forest thorough!

Is it that Man is soon deprest?
A thoughtless Thing! who, once unblest,
Does little on his memory rest,

*Or on his reason,
And Thou would'st teach him how to
find

A shelter under every wind,
A hope for times that are unkind
And every season?

Thou wander'st the wide world about,
Uncheck'd by pride or scrupulous doubt,
With friends to greet thee, or without,

Yet pleased and willing;
Meek, yielding to the occasion's call,
And all things suffering from all,
Thy function apostolical

In peace fulfilling.

1803.

X

MATTHEW

In the School of ——— is a tablet, on which
are inscribed, in gilt letters, the Names of the
several persons who have been School-masters
there since the foundation of the School, with
the time at which they entered upon and
quitted their office. Opposite to one of those
Names the Author wrote the following lines.

If Nature, for a favourite child,
In thee hath tempered so her clay,
That every hour thy heart runs wild,
Yet never once doth go astray.

Read o'er these lines; and then review
This tablet, that thus humbly rears
In such diversity of hue
Its history of two hundred years.

—When through this little wreck of
fame,

Cipher and syllable! thine eye—
Has travelled down to Matthew's name,
Pause with no common sympathy.

And, if a sleeping tear should wake,
Then be it, neither checked nor stayed:
For Matthew a request I make
Which for himself he had not made.

Poor Matthew, all his frolics o'er,
Is silent as a standing pool;
Far from the chimney's merry roar,
And murmur of the village school.

The sighs which Matthew heaved were
sighs

Of one tired out with fun and madness;
The tears which came to Matthew's eyes
Were tears of light, the dew of gladness.

Yet, sometimes, when the secret cup
Of still and serious thought went round,
It seemed as if he drank it up—
He felt with spirit so profound.

—Thou soul of God's best earthly mould!
Thou happy Soul! and can it be
That these two words of glittering gold
Are all that must remain of thee?

1799.

XI

THE TWO APRIL MORNINGS

We walked along, while bright and red
Uprose the morning sun;
And Matthew stopped, he looked, and
said,

"The will of God be done!"

A village schoolmaster was he,
With hair of glittering grey;
As blithe a man as you could see
On a spring holiday.

And on that morning, through the grass,
And by the steaming rills,

We travelled merrily, to pass
A day among the hills.

"Our work," said I, "was well begun,
Then, from thy breast what thought,
Beneath so beautiful a sun,
So sad a sigh has brought?"

A second time did Matthew stop;
And fixing still his eye
Upon the eastern mountain-top,
To me he made reply:

"Yon cloud with that long purple cleft
Brings fresh into my mind
A day like this which I have left
Full thirty years behind."

And just above yon slope of corn
Such colours, and no other,
Were in the sky, that April morn,
Of this the very brother.

With rod and line I sued the sport
Which that sweet season gave,
And, to the church-yard come, stopped
Beside my daughter's grave.

Nine summers had she scarcely seen,
The pride of all the vale:
And then she sang:—she would have
A very nightingale.

Six feet in earth my Emma lay;
And yet I loved her more,
For so it seemed, than till that day
I e'er had loved before.

And, turning from her grave, I met,
Beside the churchyard yew,
A blooming Girl, whose hair was wet
With points of morning dew.

A basket on her head she bare:
Her brow was smooth and white:
To see a child so very fair,
It was a pure delight!

No fountain from its rocky cave
E'er tripped with foot so free;
She seemed as happy as a wave
That dances on the sea.

There came from me a sigh of pain
Which I could ill confine;
I looked at her, and looked again,
And did not wish her mine!

Matthew is in his grave, yet now,
Methinks, I see him stand,
As at that moment, with a bough
Of wilding in his hand.

XII

THE FOUNTAIN

A CONVERSATION

We talked with open heart, and tongue
Affectionate and true,
A pair of friends, though I was young,
And Matthew seventy-two.

We lay beneath a spreading oak,
Beside a mossy seat;
And from the turf a fountain broke,
And gurgled at our feet.

"Now, Matthew!" said I, "let us
match

This water's pleasant tune
With some old border-song, or catch
That suits a summer's noon;

Or of the church-clock and the chimes
Sing here beneath the shade,
(That half-mad thing of witty rhymes
Which you last April made!)"

In silence Matthew lay, and eyed
The spring beneath the tree;
And thus the dear old Man replied,
The grey-haired man of glee:

"No check, no stay, this Streamlet
fears:

How merrily it goes!
'Twill murmur on a thousand years,
And flow as now it flows.

And here, on this delightful day,
I cannot choose but think
How oft, a vigorous man, I lay
Beside this fountain's brink.

My eyes are dim with childish tears,
My heart is idly stirred,
For the same sound is in my ears
Which in those days I heard.

Thus fares it still in our decay:
And yet the wiser mind
Mourns less for what age takes away
Than what it leaves behind.

The black bird amid leafy trees,
The lark above the hill,
Let loose their carols when they please,
Are quiet when they will.

With Nature never do they wage
A foolish strife; they see
A happy youth, and their old age
Is beautiful and free:

But we are pressed by heavy laws;
And often, glad no more,
We wear a face of joy, because
We have been glad of yore.

If there be one who need bemoan
His kindred laid in earth,

The household hearts that weep his own ;
It is the man of mirth.

My days, my Friend, are almost gone,
My life has been approved,
And many love me ; but by none
Am I enough beloved."

"Now both himself and me he wrongs,
The man who thus complains !
I live and sing my idle songs
Upon these happy plains ;

And, Matthew, for thy children dead
I'll be a son to thee !
At this he grasped my hand, and said,
"Alas ! that cannot be."

We rose up from the fountain-side ;
And down the smooth descent
Of the green sheep-track did we glide ;
And through the wood we went ;

And, ere we came to Leonard's rock,
He sang those witty rhymes
About the crazy old church-clock,
And the bewildered chimes.

1799.

XIII

PERSONAL TALK

I AM not One who much or oft delight
To season my fireside with personal
talk,—

Of friends, who live within an easy walk,
Or neighbours, daily, weekly, in my sight :
And, for my chance-acquaintance, ladies
bright,

Sons, mothers, maidens withering on the
stalk,

These all wear out of me, like Forms,
with chalk

Painted on rich men's floor, for one
feast-night.

Better than such discourse doth silence
long,

Long, barren silence, square with my
desire ;

To sit without emotion, hope, or aim,
In the loved presence of my cottage-fire,
And listen to the flapping of the flame,
Or kettle whispering its faint undersong.

II

"Yet life," you say, "is life ; we have
seen and see,

And with a living pleasure we describe ;
And fits of sprightly malice do but bribe
The languid mind into activity.

Sound sense, and love itself, and mirth
and glee

Are fostered by the comment and the
gibe."

Even be it so : yet still among your
tribe,

Our daily world's true Worldlings, rank
not me !

Children are blest, and powerful ; their
world lies

More justly balanced ; partly at their
feet,

And part far from them :—sweetest
melodies

Are those that are by distance made more
sweet ;

Whose mind is but the mind of his own
eyes,

He is a Slave ; the meanest we can meet !

Wings have we,—as far as we can go
We may find pleasure : wilderness and

wood,

Blank ocean and mere sky, support that
mood

Which with the lofty sanctifies the low.
Dreams, books, are each a world ; and

books, we know,

Are a substantial world, both pure and
good !

Round these, with tendrils strong as flesh
and blood,

Our pastime and our happiness will grow.
There find I personal themes, a plenteous

store,

Matter wherein right voluble I am,
To which I listen with a ready ear ;

Two shall be named, pre-eminently
dear—

The gentle Lady married to the Moor ;
And heavenly Una with her milk-
white Lamb.

IV

Nor can I not believe but that hereby
Great gains are mine ; for thus I live

remote

From evil-speaking ; rancour, never
sought,

Comes to me not ; malignant truth, or
lie.

Hence have I genial seasons, hence have I

Smooth passions, smooth discourse, and
joyous thought ;

And thus from day to day my little boat
Rocks in its harbour, lodging peaceably.

Blessings be with them—and eternal
praise,

Who gave us nobler loves, and nobler
cares—

The Poets, who on earth have made us
heirs

Of truth and pure delight by heavenly
lays !

Oh ! might my name be numbered among
theirs,

Then gladly would I end my mortal days.

XIV

TO THE SPADE OF A FRIEND

(AN AGRICULTURIST)

COMPOSED WHILE WE WERE LABOURING
TOGETHER IN HIS PLEASANT GROUNDSPADE ! with which Wilkinson hath tilled
his lands,And shaped these pleasant walks by
Emont's side,Thou art a tool of honour in my hands ;
I press thee, through the yielding soil,
with pride.Rare master has it been thy lot to know ;
Long hast Thou served a man to reason
true ;Whose life combines the best of high and
low,

The labouring many and the resting few ;

Health, meekness, ardour, quietness
secure,And industry of body and of mind ;
And elegant enjoyments, that are pure

As nature is—too pure to be refused.

Here often hast Thou heard the Poet sing
In concord with his river murmuring by ;
Or in some silent field, while timid spring
Is yet uncheered by other minstrelsy.Who shall inherit Thee when death has
laidLow in the darksome cell thine own dear
lord ?That man will have a trophy, humble
Spade !A trophy nobler than a conqueror's
sword.If he be one that feels, with skill to part
False praise from true, or, greater from
the less,Thee will he welcome to his hand and
heart,

Thou monument of peaceful happiness !

He will not dread with Thee a toilsome
day—Thee his loved servant, his inspiring
mate !And, when thou art past service, worn
away,No dull oblivious nook shall hide thy
fate.His thrift thy uselessness will never
scorn ;An heir-loom in his cottage wilt thou
be :—High will he hang thee up, well pleased
to adorn

His rustic chimney with the last of Thee !

1804.

XV

A NIGHT THOUGHT

Lo ! where the Moon along the sky

Sails with her happy destiny ;

Oft is she hid from mortal eye

Or dimly seen,

But when the clouds asunder fly

How bright her mien !

Far different we—a froward race,
Thousands though rich in Fortune's
grace

With cherished sullenness of pace

Their way pursue,

Ingrates who wear a smileless face

The whole year through.

If kindred humours e'er would make

My spirit droop for drooping's sake,

From Fancy following in thy wake,

Bright ship of heaven !

A counter impulse let me take

And be forgiven.

XVI

INCIDENT

CHARACTERISTIC OF A FAVOURITE DOG

ON his morning rounds the Master

Goes to learn how all things fare ;

Searches pasture after pasture,

Sheep and cattle eyes with care ;

And, for silence or for talk,

He hath comrades in his walk ;

Four dogs, each pair of different breed.

Distinguished two for scent, and two for
speed.

See a hare before him started !

—Oft they fly in earnest chase ;

Every dog is eager-hearted,

All the four are in the race :

And the hare whom they pursue,

Knows from instinct what to do ;

Her hope is near : no turn she makes ;

But, like an arrow, to the river takes.

Deep the river was, and crusted

Thinly by a one night's frost ;

But the nimble Hare hath trusted

To the ice, and safely crost ;

She hath crost, and without heed

All are following at full speed,

When, lo ! the ice, so thinly spread,

Breaks—and the greyhound, DART, is
over-head !

Better fate have PRINCE and SWALLOW—

See them cleaving to the sport !

Music has no heart to follow,

Little Music, she stops short.

She hath neither wish nor heart,

Hers is now another part :

A loving creature she, and brave !

And fondly strives her struggling friend
to save,

From the brink her paws she fetches,
 Very hands as you would say
 And afflicting moans she fetches,
 As he breaks the ice away.
 For herself she hath no fears,—
 Him alone she sees and hears,—
 Makes efforts with complainings; nor
 gives o'er
 Until her fellow sinks to re-appear no
 more.

1805.

XVII

TRIBUTE

TO THE MEMORY OF THE SAME DOG

LIE here, without a record of thy worth,
 Beneath a covering of the common
 earth!
 It is not from unwillingness to praise,
 Or want of love, that here no Stone we
 raise;
 More thou deserv'st; but *this* man gives
 to man,
 Brother to brother, *this* is all we can.
 Yet yet to whom thy virtues made thee
 * dead
 Shall find thee through all changes of the
 year:
 This Oak points out thy grave; the
 silent tree
 Will gladly stand a monument of thee.

We grieved for thee, and wished thy
 end were past:
 And willingly have laid thee here at last:
 For thou hadst lived till every thing that
 cheers
 In thee had yielded to the weight of
 years;
 Extreme old age had wasted thee away.
 And left thee but a glimmering of the
 day;
 Thy cars were deaf, and feeble were thy
 knees,—
 I saw thee stagger in the summer breeze,
 Too weak to stand against its sportive
 breath,
 And ready for the gentlest stroke of
 death.
 It came, and we were glad; yet tears
 were shed;
 Both man and woman wept when thou
 wert dead;
 Not only for a thousand thoughts that
 were,
 Old household thoughts, in which thou
 hadst thy share;
 But for some precious boons vouchsafed
 to thee,
 Found scarcely any where in like degree!
 For love, that comes wherever life and
 sense

Are given by God, in thee was most
 intense;
 A pain of heart, a feeling of the mind,
 A tender sympathy, which did thee bind:
 Not only to us Men, but to thy Kind:
 Yea, for thy fellow-brutes in thee we saw
 A soul of love, love's intellectual law:
 Hence, if we wept, it was not done in
 shame;
 Our tears from passion and from reason
 came,
 And, therefore, shalt thou be an honoured
 name!

1805.

XVIII
FIDELITY

A BARKING sound the Shepherd hears,
 A cry as of a dog or fox:
 He halts—and searches with his eyes
 Among the scattered rocks:
 And now at distance can discern
 A stirring in a brake of fern;
 And instantly a dog is seen,
 Glancing through that covert green.

The Dog is not of mountain breed:
 Its motions, too, are wild and shy:
 With something, as the Shepherd thinks,
 Unusual in its cry:
 Nor is there any one in sight
 All round, in hollow or on height;
 Nor shout, nor whistle strikes his ear;
 What is the creature doing here?

It was a cove, a huge recess,
 That keeps, till June, December's snow;
 A lofty precipice in front,
 A silent tarn¹ below!
 Far in the bosom of Helvellyn,
 Remote from public road or dwelling,
 Pathway, or cultivated land;
 From trace of human foot or hand.

There sometimes doth a leaping fish
 Send through the tarn's lonely cheer;
 The crags repeat the raven's croak.
 In symphony austere:
 Thither the rainbow comes—the cloud—
 And mists that spread the flying shroud;
 And sunbeams; and the sounding blast,
 That, if it could, would hurry past;
 But that enormous barrier holds it fast.

Not free from boding thoughts, a while
 The Shepherd stood; then makes his
 way

O'er rocks and stones, following the Dog
 As quickly as he may;
 Nor far had gone before he found
 A human skeleton on the ground:
 The appalled Discoverer with a sigh
 Looks round, to learn the history.

¹ Tarn is a small Mere or Lake, mostly high
 up in the mountains.

From those abrupt and perilous rocks
The Man had fallen, that place of fear !
At length upon the Shepherd's mind
It breaks, and all is clear :
He instantly recalled the name,
And who he was, and whence he came ;
Remembered, too, the very day
On which the Traveller passed this way.

But hear a wonder, for whose sake
This lamentable tale I tell !
A lasting monument of words
This wonder merits well.
The Dog, whose art was hovering nigh,
Repeating the same timid cry,
This Dog, had ~~been~~ ^{been} through three
months' space
A dweller in that savage place.

Yes, proof was plain that, since the day
When this ill-fated Traveller died,
The Dog had watched about the spot,
Or by his master's side :
How nourished here through such long
time
He knows, who gave that love sublime :
And gave that strength of feeling, great
Above all human estimate !

1805.

XIX ODE TO DUTY

" Jam non consilio bonus, sed more eductus, ut non tantum recte facere possum, sed nisi recte facere non possum."

STERN Daughter of the Voice of God !
O Duty ! if that name thou love
Who art a light to guide, a rod
To check the erring, and reprove ;
Thou, who art victory and law
When empty terrors overawe ;
From vain temptations dost set free ;
And calm'st the weary strife of frail
humanity !

There are who ask not if thine eye
Be on them ; who, in love and truth,
Where no misgiving is, rely
Upon the genial sense of youth :
Glad Hearts ! without reproach or blot ;
Who do thy work, and know it not :
Oh ! if through confidence misplaced
They fail, thy saving arms, dread Power !
around them cast.

Serene will be our days and bright,
And happy will our nature be,
When love is an unerring light,
And joy its own security.
And they a blissful course may hold
Even now, who, not unwisely bold,
Live in the spirit of this creed :
Yet seek thy firm support, according to
their need.

I, loving freedom, and untried ;
No sport of every random gust,
Yet being to myself a guide,
Too blindly have reposed my trust :
And oft, when in my heart was heard
Thy timely mandate, I deferred
The task, in smoother walks to stray ;
But thee I now would serve more strictly,
if I may.

Through no disturbance of my soul,
Or strong compunction in me wrought,
I supplicate for thy control ;
But in the quietness of thought :
Me this unchartered freedom fires ;
I feel the weight of chance-desires :
My hopes no more must change their
name,

I long for a repose that ever is the same.

Stern Lawgiver ! yet thou dost wear
The Godhead's most benignant grace ;
Nor know we anything so fair
As is the smile upon thy face :
Flowers laugh before thee on their beds
And fragrance in thy footing treads ;
Thou dost preserve the stars from wrong ;
And the most ancient heavens, through
Thee, are fresh and strong.

To humbler functions, awful Power !
I call thee : I myself commend
Unto thy guidance from this hour ;
Oh, let my weakness have an end !
Give unto me, made lowly wise,
The spirit of self-sacrifice :
The confidence of reason give ;
And in the light of truth thy Bondman
let me live !

1805.

XX CHARACTER OF THE HAPPY WARRIOR

Who is the happy Warrior ? Who is he
That every man in arms should wish to
be ?

—It is the generous Spirit, who, when
brought
Among the tasks of real life, hath
wrought
Upon the plan that pleased his boyish
thought :

Whose high endeavours are an inward light
That makes the path before him always
bright :

Who, with a natural instinct to discern
What knowledge can perform, is diligent
to learn :

Abides by this resolve, and stops not
there,
But makes his moral being his prime
care ;

Who, doomed to go in company with
Pain,

And Fear, and Bloodshed, \ miserable
train !

Turns his necessity to glorious gain ;
In face of these doth exercise a power
Which is our human nature's highest
dower ;

Controls them and subdues, transmutes,
bereaves

Of their bad influence, and their good
receives :

By objects, which might force the soul
to abate

Her feeling, rendered more compas-
sionate ;

* Is placable—because occasions rise
So often that demand such sacrifice ;
More skilful in self-knowledge, even
more pure,

As tempted more ; more able to endure,
As more exposed to suffering and dis-
tress ;

Thence, also, more alive to tenderness.
—'Tis he whose law is reason ; who
depends

Upon that law as on the best of friends ;
Whence, in a state where men are
tempted still

To evil for a guard against worse ill,
And what in quality or act is best
Doth seldom on a right foundation rest,
He labours good on good to fix, and owes
To virtue every triumph that he knows :
—Who, if he rise to station of command,
Rises by open means ; and there will
stand

On honourable terms, or else retire,
And in himself possess his own desire ;
Who comprehends his trust, and to the
same

Keeps faithful with a singleness of aim ;
And therefore does not stoop, nor lie in
wait

For wealth, or honours, or for worldly
state ;

Whom they must follow ; on whose head
must fall,

* Like showers of manna, if they come at
all :

Whose powers shed round him in the
common strife,

Or mild concerns of ordinary life,
A constant influence, a peculiar grace :
But who, if he be called upon to face
Some awful moment to which Heaven
has joined

Great issues, good or bad for human kind,
Is happy as a Lover ; and attired
With sudden brightness, like a Man
inspired ;

And, through the heat of conflict, keeps
the law

In calmness made, and sees what he fore-
saw

Or if an unexpected call succeed,
Come when it will, is equal to the need ;
—He who, though thus endowed as with
a sense

And faculty for storm and turbulence,
Is yet a Soul whose master-bias leans
To homefelt pleasures and to gentle
scenery :

Sweet images ! which, wheresoe'er he be,
Are at his heart : and such fidelity

It is his darling passion to approve ;
More brave for this, that he hath much
to love ;—

'Tis, finally, the Hero who ~~is~~ High,
Conspicuous object in a Nation's eye,
Or left unthought of in obscurity—

Who, with a toward or untoward lot,
Prosperous or adverse, to his wish or
not—

Plays, in the many games of life, that one
Where what he most doth value must be
won :

Whom neither shape of danger can dis-
may,

Nor thought of tender happiness betray ;
Who, not content that former worth
stand fast,

Looks forward, persevering to the last,
From well to better, daily self-surpassing ;
Who, whether praise of him must walk
the earth

For ever, and to noble deeds give birth,
Or he must fall, to sleep without his
fame,

And leave a dead unprofitable name—
Finds comfort in himself and in his
cause ;

And, while the mortal mult is gathering,
draws

His breath in confidence of Heaven's
applause :

This is the happy Warrior ; this is He
That every Man in arms should wish to
be.

1806.

XXI

THE FORCE OF PRAYER ;

OR,

THE FOUNDING OF BOLTON PRIORY

A TRADITION

" What is good for a beggar here ?"
With these dark words begins my Tale ;
And their meaning is, whence can com-
fort spring

When Prayer is of no avail ?

" What is good for a beggar here ?"
The Falconer to the Lady said ;

¹ See the White Doe of Rylstone.

And she made answer "ENDLESS SORROW!"

For she knew that her Son was dead.

She knew it by the Falconer's words,
And from the look of the Falconer's eye:
And from the love which was in her soul
For her youthful Romilly.

—Young Romilly through Barden woods,
Is ranging high and low;
And holds a greyhound in a leash,
To let slip upon buck or doe.

The ~~passage~~ ^{passage} ~~passage~~ that fearful chasm,
How tempting to bestride!
For lordly Wharf is there pent in
With rocks on either side.

• This striding-place is called THE STRID,
A name which it took of yore:
A thousand years hath it borne that
name,
And shall a thousand more.

And hither is young Romilly come,
And what may now forbid
That he, perhaps for the hundredth time,
Shall bound across THE STRID?

He sprang in glee,—for what cared he
That the river was strong, and the rocks
were steep?—

• But the greyhound in the leash hung
back,
And checked him in his leap.

The Boy is in the arms of Wharf,
And strangled by a merciless force:
For never more was young Romilly seen
Till he rose a lifeless corse.

Now there is stillness in the vale,
And long, unspeaking, sorrow:
Wharf shall be to wailing hearts
A name more sad than Yarrow.

If for a lover the Lady wept,
A solace she might borrow
From death, and from the passion of
death;—
Old Wharf might heal her sorrow.

She weeps not for the wedding-day
Which was to be to-morrow:
Her hope was a further-looking hope,
And hers is a mother's sorrow.

He was a tree that stood alone,
And proudly did its branches wave:
And the root of this delightful tree
Was in her husband's grave!

Long, long in darkness did she sit,
And her first words were, "Let there be
In Bolton, on the field of Wharf,
A stately Priory!"

The stately Priory was reared;
And Wharf, as he moved along,
To matins joined a mournful voice,
Nor failed at even-song.

And the Lady prayed, in heaviness
That looked not for relief!
But slowly did her succour come,
And a patience to her grief.

Oh! there is never sorrow of heart
That shall lack a tuneful end,
If but to God we turn, and ask
Of Him to be our friend!

1808.

XXII

A FACT, AND AN IMAGINATION:

OR,

CANUTE AND ALFRED, ON THE SEA-
SHORE

THE Danish Conqueror, on his royal
chair,

Mustering a face of haughty sovereignty,
To aid a covert purpose, cried—"O ye
Approaching Waters of the deep, that
share

With this green isle my fortunes, come
not where
Your Master's throne is set."—Deaf was
the Sea:

Her waves rolled on, respecting his
decree
Less than they heed a breath of wanton
air.

—Then Canute, rising from the invaded
throne,
Said to his servile Courtiers,—“Poor the
reach.

The undisguised extent, of mortal sway!
He only is a King, and he alone
Deserves the name (this truth the billows
preach)

Whose everlasting laws, sea, earth, and
heaven, obey.”

This just reproof the prosperous Dane
Drew from the influx of the main,
For some whose rugged northern mouths
would strain

At oriental flattery:

And Canute (fact more worthy to be
known)

From that time forth did for his brows
disown

The ostentatious symbol of a crown;
Esteeming earthly royalty
Contemptible as vain.

Now hear what one of elder days,
Rich theme of England's fondest praise,
Her darling Alfred, might have spoken;
To cheer the remnant of his host

When he was driven from coast to coast,
Distressed and harassed, but with mind
unbroken :

" My faithful followers, lo ! the tide is
spent
That rose, and steadily advanced to fill
The shores and channels, working Nature's will
Among the mazy streams that backward
went,
And in the sluggish pools where ships are
pent :
And now, his task performed, the flood
stands still,
At the green base of many an inland hill.
In placid beauty and sublime content !
Such the repose that sage and hero find ;
Such measured rest the sedulous and
good
Of humbler name ; whose souls do, like
the flood
Of Ocean, press right on ; or gently
wind,
Neither to be diverted nor withstood,
Until they reach the bounds by Heaven
assigned."

1816.

XXIII

" A LITTLE onward lend thy guiding hand
To these dark steps, a little further on !"
—What trick of memory to my voice hath
brought
This mournful iteration ? For though
Time,
The Conqueror, crowns the Conquered,
on this brow
Planting his favourite silver diadem,
Nor he, nor minister of his—intent
To run before him, hath enrolled me yet,
Though not unmenaced, among those
who lean
Upon a living staff, with borrowed sight.
—O my own Dora, my beloved child !
Should that day come—but hark ! the
birds salute
The cheerful dawn, brightening for me
the east ;
For me, thy natural leader, once again
Impatient to conduct thee, not as erst
A tottering infant, with compliant stoop
From flower to flower supported ; but
to curb
Thy nymph-like step swift-bounding o'er
the lawn,
Along the loose rocks, or the slippery
verge
Of foaming torrents.—From thy orisons
Come forth ; and, while the morning air
is yet
Transparent as the soul of innocent
youth,

Let me, thy happy guide, now point thy
way,
And now precede thee, winding to and
fro,
Till we by perseverance gain the top
Of some smooth ridge, whose brink precipitous
Kindles intense desire for powers withheld
From this corporeal frame ; whereon
who stands,
Is seized with strong incitement to push
forth
His arms, as swimmer, and plunge—
dread thought
For pastime plunges—into the " abrupt
abyss,"
Where ravens spread their plumy vans,
at ease !

And yet more gladly thee would I conduct
Through woods and spacious forests,—
to behold
There, how the Original of human art,
Heaven-prompted Nature, measures and
erects
Her temples, fearlessness for the stately work,
Though waves, to every breeze its high-
arched roof,
And storms the pillars rock. But we
such schools
Of reverential awe will chiefly seek
In the still summer noon, while beams of
light,
Reposing here, and in the aisles beyond
Traceably gliding through the dusk,
recall
To mind the living presences of nuns ;
A gentle, pensive, white-robed sister-
hood,
Whose saintly radiance mitigates the
gloom
Of those terrestrial fabrics, where they
serve,
To Christ, the Sun of righteousness,
espoused.

Now also shall the page of classic lore,
To these glad eyes from bondage freed,
again
Lie open ; and the book of Holy Writ,
Again unfolded, passage clear shall yield
To heights more glorious still, and into
shades
More awful, where, advancing hand in
hand,
We may be taught, O Darling of my
care !
To calm the affections, elevate the soul,
And consecrate our lives to truth and
love.

1816.

XXIV
ODE TO LYCORIS

May, 1817

AN age hath been when Earth was proud
Of lustre too intense
To be sustained; and Mortals bowed
The front in self-defence.
Who then, if Dian's crescent gleamed,
Or Cupid's sparkling arrow, streamed,
While on the wing the Urchin played,
Could fearlessly approach the shade?
—Enough for one soft vernal day,
If I, a babe, in that time,
And nurtured in a hazy clime,
May haunt this horrid bay:
Where amorous water multiplies
The flitting halcyon's vivid dye;
And smooths her liquid breast—to show
These swan-like specks of mountain snow,
White as the pair that slid along the
plains
Of heaven, when Venus held the reins!

In youth we love the darksome lawn
Brushed by the owl's wing;
Then, Twilight is preferred to Dawn,
And Autumn to the Spring.
Sad fancies do we then affect,
In luxury of disrespect
To our own prodigal excess
Of too familiar happiness.
Lycoris (if such name befit
Thee, thee my life's celestial sign!)
When Nature marks the year's decline,
Be ours to welcome it;
Pleased with the harvest hope that runs
Before the path of milder suns;
Pleased while the sylvan world displays
Its ripeness to the feeding gaze;
Pleased when the sullen winds resound
the knell
Of the resplendent miracle.

But something whispers to my heart
That, as we downward tend,
Lycoris! life requires an *ari*
To which our souls must bend;
A skill—to balance and supply;
And, ere the flowing fount be dry,
As soon it must, a sense to sip,
Or drink, with no fastidious lip.
Then welcome, above all, the Guest
Whose smiles, diffused o'er land and sea,
Seem to recal the Deity
Of youth into the breast:
May pensive Autumn ne'er present
A claim to her disparagement
While blossoms and the budding spray
Inspire us in our own decay;

Still, as we nearer draw to life's dark goal,
Be hoped, O Spring the favourite of the
Soul!

XXV

TO THE SAME

ENOUGH of climbing toil!—Ambition
treads
Here, as 'mid busier scenes, ground steep
and rough,
Or slippery even to peril! and each step,
As we for most uncertain recompense
Mount towards the empire of the fickle
clouds,
Each weary step, dwarfing the world
below,
Induces, for its old familiar sights,
Unacceptable feelings of contempt,
With wonder mixed—that Man could e'er
be tied,
In anxious bondage, to such nice array
And formal fellowship of petty things!
—Oh! 'tis the heart that magnifies this
life,
Making a truth and beauty of her own;
And moss-grown alleys, circumscribing
shades,
And gurgling rills, assist her in the work
More efficaciously than realms outspread,
As in a map, before the adventurer's
gaze,—
Ocean and Earth contending for regard.
The umbrageous woods are left—how
far beneath!
But lo! where darkness seems to guard
the mouth
Of yon wild cave, whose jagged brows are
fringed
With flaccid threads of ivy, in the still
And sultry air, depending motionless.
Yet cool the space within, and not un-
cheered
(As whoso enters shall ere long perceive)
By stealthy influx of the timid day
Mingling with night, such twilight to
compose
As Numa loved; when, in the Egerian
grot,
From the sage Nymph appearing at his
wish,
He gained whate'er a regal mind might
ask.
Or need, of counsel breathed through lips
divine.

Long as the heat shall rage, let that
dim cave
Protect us, there deciphering as we may
Diluvian records; or the signs of Earth
Interpreting; or counting for old Time
His minutes, by reiterated drops,
Audible tears, from some invisible source

That, deepens upon fancy—more and more

Drawn toward the centre whence those sighs creep forth

To awe the lightness of humanity.

Or, shutting upthyselves within thyself,

There let me see thee sink into a mood

Of gentler thought, protracted till thine eye

Be calm as water when the winds are gone,

And no one can tell whither. Dearest Friend!

We too have known such happy hours together

That, were power granted to replace them (fetched

From out the pensive shadows where they lie) [shine,

In the first warmth of their original sun-

Loth should I be to use it! passing sweet

Are the domains of tender memory! 1817.

XXVI

SEPTEMBER, 1819

THE sylvan slopes with corn-clad fields
Are hung, as if with golden shields,

Bright trophies of the sun!

Like a fair sister of the sky,

Unruffled doth the blue lake lie,

The mountains looking on.

And, sooth to say, yon vocal grove,

Albeit uninspired by love,

By love untaught to ring,

May well afford to mortal ear

An impulse more profoundly dear

Than music of the Spring.

For *that* from turbulence and heat

Proceeds, from some uncasy seat

In nature's struggling frame,

Some region of impatient life:

And jealousy, and quivering strife,

Therein a portion claim.

This, this is holy:—while I hear

These vespers of another year,

This hymn of thanks and praise,

My spirit seems to mount above

The anxieties of human love,

And earth's precarious days.

But list!—though winter storms be nigh,

Unchecked is that soft harmony:

There lives Who can provide

For all his creatures; and in Him,

Even like the radiant Seraphim,

These choristers confide.

XXVII

UPON THE SAME OCCASION

DEPARTING summer hath assumed

An aspect tenderly illumed,

The gentlest look of spring;

That calls from yonder leafy shade
Unfaded, yet prepared to fade,
A timely carolling.

No faint and hesitating trill,

Such tribute as to winter chill

The lonely redbreast pays!

Clear, loud, and lively is the din.

From social warblers gathering in

Their harvest of sweet lays.

Nor doth the example fail to cheer

Me, conscious that my leaf is ere,

And yellow on the bough,—

Fall, rosy garlands, from my head!

Ye myrtle wreaths, your fragrance shed

Around a younger brow!

Yet will I temperately rejoice;

Wide is the range, and free the choice

Of discordant themes;

Which, haply, kindred souls may prize

Not less than vernal ecstasies,

And passion's feverish dreams.

For deathless powers to verse belong,

And they like Demi-gods are strong

On whom the Muses smile;

But some their function have disclaimed,

Best pleased with what is aptliest framed

To encrave and defile.

Not such the initiatory strains

Committed to the silent plains

In Britain's earliest dawn:

Trembled the groves, the stars grew pale,

While all-too-daringly the veil

Of nature was withdrawn!

Nor such the spirit-stirring note

When the live chords Alcaeus smote,

Inflamed by sense of wrong;

Woe! woe to Tyrants! from the lyre

Broke threateningly, in sparkles dire

Of fierce vindictive song.

And not unhallowed was the page

By winged Love inscribed, to assuage

The pangs of vain pursuit;

Love listening while the Lesbian Maid

With finest touch of passion swayed

Her own Æolian lute.

O ye, who patiently explore

The wreck of Herculean lore,

What rapture! could ye seize

Some Theban fragment, or unroll

One precious, tender-hearted, scroll

Of pure Simonides.

That were, indeed, a genuine birth

Of poesy; a bursting forth

Of genius from the dust:

What Horace gloried to behold,

What Maro loved, shall we unfold?

Can haughty Time be just! 1819.

XXVIII

MEMORY

A PEN—to register ; a key—
That winds through secret wards ;
Are well assigned to Memory
By allegoric Bards.

As aptly, also, might be given
A Pencil to her hand ;
That, softening objects, sometimes even
Outstrips the heart's demand ;

That . . . when for anyone distress, the hues
Of lingering care by shades,
Long-vanished happiness refines,
And clothes in brighter hues ;

Yet, like a tool of Fancy, works
Those Spectres to dilate
That startle Conscience, as she lurks
Within her lonely seat.

O ! that our lives, which flee so fast,
In purity were such,
That not an image of the past
Should fear that pencil's touch !

Retirement then might hourly look
Upon a soothing scene,
Age steal to his allotted nook
Contented and serene ;

With heart as calm as lakes that sleep,
In frosty moonlight glistening ;
Or mountain rivers, where they creep
Along a channel smooth and deep,
To their own far-off murmurs listening.

1823.

XXIX

THIS Lawn, a carpet all alive
With shadows flung from leaves—to
strive

In dance, amid a press
Of sunshine, an apt emblem yields
Of Worldlings revelling in the fields
Of strenuous idleness ;

Less quick the stir when tide and breeze
Encounter, and to narrow seas

Forbid a moment's rest ;
The medley less when boreal Lights
Glance to and fro, like airy Sprites
To feats of arms address !

Yet, spite of all this eager strife,
This ceaseless play, the genuine life
That serves the steadfast hours,
In the grass beneath, that grows
Unheeded, and the mute repose
Of sweetly-breathing flowers.

1823.

XXX

HUMANITY

[The Rocking-stones, alluded to in the beginning of the following verses, are supposed to have been used, by our British ancestors, both for judicial and religious purposes. Such stones are not uncommonly found, at this day, both in Great Britain and in Ireland.]

WHAT though the Accused, upon his own
appeal

To righteous Gods when man has ceased
to feel,

Or at a doubting Judge's stern command,
Before the STONE OF POWER no longer
stand—

To take his sentence from the balanced
Block,

As, at his touch, it rocks, or seems to rock ;
Though, in the depths of sunless groves,
no more

The Druid-priest the hallowed Oak adore ;
Yet, for the Initiate, rocks and whispering
trees

Do still perform mysterious offices !
And functions dwell in beast and bird
that sway

The reasoning mind, or with the fancy
play,

Inviting, at all seasons, ears and eyes
To watch for undelusive auguries :—
Not uninspired appear their simplest
ways ;

Their voices mount symbolical of praise—
To mix with hymns that Spirits make and
hear ;

And to fallen man their innocence is dear.
Euraptured Art draws from those sacred
springs

Streams that reflect the poetry of things !
Where christian Martyrs stand in hues
portrayed,

That, might a wish avail, would never
fade,

Borne in their hands the lily and the palm
Shed round the altar a celestial calm ;
There, too, behold the lamb and guileless
dove

Prest in the tenderness of virgin love
To saintly bosoms !—Glorious is the
blending

Of right affections climbing or descend-
ing

Along a scale of light and life, with cares
Alternate ; carrying holy thoughts and
prayers

Up to the sovereign seat of the Most
High ;

Descending to the worm in charity ;
Like those good Angels whom a dream
of night

Gave, in the field of Luz, to Jacob's sight
All, while he slept, treading the pendant
stairs

Earthward or heavenward, a radiant
messengers,
That, with a perfect will in one accord
Of strict obedience, serve the Almighty
Lord;
And with untired humility forbore
To speed their errand by the wings they

What a fair world were ours for verse to
paint,
If Power could live at ease with self-
restraint!

Opinion bow before the naked sense
Of the great Vision,—faith in Providence;
Merciful over all his creatures, just
To the least particle of sentient dust;
But, fixing by immutable decrees,
Seedtime and harvest for his purposes!
Then would be closed the restless oblique
eye [spv]

That looks for evil like a treacherous
Disputes would then relax, like stormy
winds

That into breezes sink; impetuous minds
By discipline endeavour to grow meek
As Truth herself, whom they profess to
seek.

Then Genius, shunning fellowship with
Pride,

Would braid his golden locks at Wisdom's
side:

Love ebb and flow untroubled by caprice;
And not alone harsh tyranny would
cease,

But unoffending creatures find release
From qualified oppression, whose defence
Rests on a hollow plea of recompense:
Thought-tempered wrongs, for each
humane respect

Off worse to bear, or deadlier in effect.
Witness those glances of indignant scorn
From some high-minded Slave, impelled
to spurn

The kindness that would make him less
forlorn;

Or, if the soul to bondage be subdued,
His look of pitiable gratitude!

Alas for thee, bright Galaxy of Isles,
Whose day departs in pomp, returns
with smiles—

To greet the flowers and fruitage of a
land,

As the sun mounts, by sea-born breezes
fanned;

A land whose azure mountain-tops are
seats

For Gods in council, whose green vales,
retreats

Fit for the shades of heroes, mingling
there

To breathe Elysian peace in upper air.

Though cold as winter, gloomy as the
grave,
Stone-walls a prisoner make, but not a
slave.

Shall man assume a property in man?
Lay on the moral will a withering ban?
Shame that our laws at distance still
protect

Enormities which they at home reject!
"Slaves cannot breathe in England"—
yet that boast

Is but a mockery! when from coast to
coast,

Though fettered slave be none, her floors
and soil

Groan underneath a weight of slavish
toil,

For the poor Many, measured out by rules
Fetched with cupidity from heartless
schools,

That to an Idol, falsely called "the Wealth
Of Nations," sacrifice a People's health,
Body and mind and soul; a thirst so
keen

Is ever urging on the vast machine
Of sleepless labour, mid whose dizzy
wheels

The Power least prized is that which
thinks and feels.

Then, for the pastimes of this delicate
age,

And all the heavy or light vassalage
Which for their sakes we fasten, as may
suit

Our varying moods, on human kind or
brute,

'Twere well in little, as in great, to pause,
Lest Fancy trifle with eternal laws.

Not from his fellows only man may learn
Rights to compare and duties to discern!

All creatures and all objects, in degree,
Are friends and patrons of humanity.

There are to whom the garden, grove,
and field,

Perpetual lessons of forbearance yield;
Who would not lightly violate the grace

The lowliest flower possesses in its place;
Nor shorten the sweet life, too fugitive,

Which nothing less than Infinite Power
could give. 1829.

XXXI

THOUGHT ON THE SEASONS

FLATTERED with promise of escape

From every hurtful blast,

Spring takes, Osprightly May! thy shape,
Her loveliest and her last.

Less fair is summer riding high

In fierce solstitial power,

Less fair than when a lenient sky

Brings on her parting hour.

When earth repays with golden sheaves
The labours of the plough,
And ripening fruits and forest leaves
All brightest on the bough ;

What pensive beauty autumn shows,
Before she hears the sound
Of winter rushing in, to close
The emblematic round !

Suff be our Spring, our Summer such ;
So may our Autumn blend
With hoary Winter, and Life touch,
Through heaven-born hope, her end !

1829.

XXXII

TO—

UPON THE BIRTH OF HER FIRST-BORN CHILD,
MARCH, 1833

'Tum, porro puer, ut exvis projectus ab undis
Natis, nudus humi jacet, etc.'—*Lucretius*.

Like a shipwreck'd Sailor tost
By rough waves on a perilous coast,
Lies the Babe, in helplessress
And in tenderest nakedness,
Flung by labouring nature forth
Upon the mercies of the earth.
Can its eyes beseech ?—no more
Than the hands are free to implore :
Voice but serves for one brief cry ;
Plaint was it ? or prophecy
Of sorrow that will surely come ?
Omen of man's grievous doom !

But, O Mother ! by the close
Duly granted to thy throes ;
By the silent thanks, now tending
Incense-like to Heaven, descending
Now to mingle and to move
With the gush of earthly love,
As a debt to that frail Creature,
Instrument of struggling Nature
From the blissful calm, the peace
Known but to this one release—
Can the pitying spirit doubt
That for human-kind springs out
From the penalty a sense
Of more than mortal recompense ?

As a floating summer cloud,
Though of gorgeous drapery proud,
To the sun-burnt traveller,
Or the stooping labourer,
 Oft-times makes its bounty known
By its shadow round him thrown ;
So, by chequerings of sad cheer,
Heavenly Guardians, brooding near,
Of their presence tell—too bright
Haply for corporeal sight !
Ministers of grace divine
Feelingly their brows incline
O'er this seeming Castaway

Breathing, in the light of day,
Something like the faintest breath
That has power to baffle death—
Beautiful, while very weakness
Captivates like passive meekness.

And, sweet Mother ! under warrant
Of the universal Parent,
Who repays in season due
Them who have, like thee, been true
To the filial chain let down
From this everlasting throne,
Angels hovering round thy couch,
With their softest whispers vouch,
That—whatever griefs may fret,
Care's entangle, sins beset,
This thy First-born, and with tears
Stain her cheek in future years—
Heavenly succour, not denied
To the babe, whate'er betide,
Will to the woman be supplied !

Mother ! blest be thy calm ease ;
Blest the starry promises,—
And the firmament benign
Hallowed be it, where they shine !
Yes, for them whose souls have scope
Ample for a winged hope,
And can earthward bend an ear
For needful listening, pledge is here,
That, if thy new-born Charge shall tread
In thy footsteps, and be led
By that other Guide, whose light
Of manly virtues, mildly bright,
Gave him first the wished-for part
In thy gentle virgin heart ;
Then, amid the storms of life
Presignified by that dread strife
Whence ye have escaped together,
She may look for serene weather ;
In all trials sure to find
Comfort for a faithful mind ;
Kindlier issues, holier rest,
Than even now await her prest,
Conscious Nursing, to thy breast !

XXXIII

THE WARNING

A SEQUEL TO THE FOREGOING

List, the winds of March are blowing ;
Her ground-flowers shrink, afraid of show-
ing
Their meek heads to the nipping air,
Which ye feel not, happy pair !
Sunk into a kindly sleep.
We, meanwhile, our hope will keep ;
And if Time leagued with adverse Change
(Too busy fear !) shall cross its range,
Whate'er check they bring,
Anxious duty hindering,
To like hope our prayers will cling.

Thus, while the ruminating spirit feeds
Upon the events of home as life proceeds,
Affections pure and holy in their source
Gain a fresh impulse, run a livelier
course :

Hopes that within the Father's heart
prevail,
Are in the experienced Grandsire's slow
to fail ;

And if the harp pleased his gay youth, it
rings

To his grave touch with no ready
strings,

While thoughts press on, and feelings
overflow,

And quick words round him fall like flakes
of snow.

Thanks to the Powers that yet main-
tain their sway,

And have renewed the tributary Lav.
Truths of the heart flock in with eager
pace,

And FANCY greets them with a fond em-
brace ;

Swift as the rising sun his beams extends
She shoots the tidings forth to distant
friends :

Their gifts she hails (deemed precious,
as they prove

For the unconscious Babe so prompt a
love !)—

But from this peaceful centre of delight
Vague sympathies have urged her to
take flight :

Rapt into upper regions, like the bee
That sucks from mountain heath her
honey fee :

Or, like the warbling lark intent to shroud
His head in sunbeams or a bowery cloud,
She soars—and here and there her pinions
rest

On proud towers, like this humble cottage,
blest

With a new visitant, an infant guest—
Towers where red streamers flout the
breezy sky

In pomp forseen by her creative eye,
When feasts shall crowd the hall, and
steeple bells

Glad proclamation make, and heights and
dells

Catch the blithe music as it sinks and
swells,

And harboured ships, whose pride is on
the sea,

Shall hoist their topmast flags in sign of
glee,

Honouring the hope of noble ancestry.

But who (though neither reckoning
ills assigned

By Nature, nor reviewing in the mind

The track that was, and is, and must be,
worn

With weary feet by all of woman born)—
Shall now by such a gift with joy be moved,

Nor feel the fulness of that joy reproved ?
Not He, whose last faint memory will
command

The truth that Britain was his native
land ;

Whose infant soul was tutored to confide
In the cleansed faith for which her
martyrs died :

Whose boyish ear the voice of her renown
With rapture thrilled :—

Of Saxon liberty that Alfred wore,
Alfred, dear Babe, thy great Progenitor !

—Not He, who from her mellowed prac-
tice drew

His social sense of just, and fair, and true ;
And saw, thereafter, on the soil of France

Rash Policy begin her maniac dance,
Foundations broken up, the deeps run
wild,

Nor grieved to see (himself not un-
guiled)

Woke from the dream, the dreamer to
upbraid,

And learn how sanguine expectations fade
When novel trusts by folly are betrayed,—

To see Presumption, turing pale, refrain
From further havoc, but repent in vain.—

Good aims he down, and perish in the road
Where guilt had urged them on with
ceaseless goad,

Proofs thickening round her that on
public ends

Domestic virtue vitally depends,
That civic strife can turn the happiest
hearth

Into a grievous sore of self-tormenting
earth.

Can such a One, dear Babe ! though
glad and proud

To welcome thee, repel the fears that
crowd

Into his English breast, and spare to
quake

Less for his own than for thy innocent
sake ?

Too late—or, should the providence of
God

Lead, through dark ways by sin and
sorrow trod,

Justice and peace to a secure abode,
Too soon—thou com'st into this breath-
ing world ;

Ensigns of mimic outrage are unfurled
Who shall preserve or prop the tottering
Realm ?

What hand suffice to govern the state-
ment ?

If, in the aims of men, the surest test
Of good or bad (what'er be sought for
or proof)

Lie in the means required, or ways ordain'd,
For compassing the end, else never
gained;
Yet governors and govern'd both are
blind

To this plain truth, or fling it to the wind;
If to expedience principle must bow;
Past, future, shrinking up beneath the
incumbent Now;

If con-^{cession} concession still must feed
The thirst for power in men who ne'er
concede:

Nor turn aside, unless to shape a way
For domination at some riper day:

If generous Loyalty must stand in awe
Of subtle treason, in his mask of law,
Or with bravado insolent and hard,
Provoking punishment, to win reward;
If office help the factious to conspire,
And they who *should* extinguish, fan the
fire—

Then, with the sceptre be, a straw, the
crown

Sit loosely, like the this ^{is} crest of down;
To be blown off at will, by Power that
spares it

In cunning patience, from the head that
wears it.

Lost people, trained to theoretic
feud!

Lost above all, ye labouring multitude!
Bewildered whether ye, by slanderous
tongues

Deceived, mistake calamities for wrongs;
And over fancied usurpations brood,
Off snapping at revenge in sullen mood;
Or, from long stress of real injuries fly
To desperation for a remedy;

In bursts of outrage spread your judg-
ments wide,

And to your wrath cry out, "Be thou our
guide!"

Or, bound by oaths, come forth to tread
earth's floor

In marshalled thousands, darkening street
and moor

With the worst shape mock-patience ever
wore;

Or, to the giddy top of self-esteem
By Flatterers carried, mount into a dream
Of boundless suffrage, at whose sage be-
hest

Justice shall rule, disorder be suppress'd,
And every man sit down as Plenty's
Guest!

—O for a bridle bitted with remorse
To stop your Leaders in their headstrong
course!

W.P.

Oh, may the Almighty scatter with his
grace

These trusts, and lead you to a safer place,
By paths no human wisdom can foretrace!
May He pour round you, from worlds far
above

Man's feverish passions, his pure light
of love,

That quietly restores the natural mien
To hope, and makes truth willing to be
seen!

Else shall your blood-stained hands in
frenzy reap

Fields gaily sown when promises were
cheap.—

Why is the Past belied with wicked art,
The Future made to play so false a part,
Among a people famed for strength of
mind,

Foremost in freedom, noblest of man-
kind?

We act as if we joyed in the sad tune
Storms make in rising, valued in the moon
Nought but her changes. Thus, un-
grateful Nation!

If thou persist, and, scorning moderation,
Spread for thyself the snares of tribu-
lation,

Whom, then, shall meekness guard?
What saving skill

Lie in forbearance, strength in standing
still?

—Soon shall the widow (for the speed of
Time

Nought equals when the hours are winged
with crime)

Widow, or wife, implore on tremulous
knee,

From him who judged her lord, a like
decree;

The skies will weep o'er old men desolate:
Ye little-ones! Earth shudders at your
fate,

Outcasts and homeless orphans—

But turn, my Soul, and from the sleep-
ing pair

Learn thou the beauty of omniscient care!
Be strong in faith, bid anxious thoughts

lie still;

Seek for the good and cherish it—the ill
Oppose, or bear with a submissive will.

1833.

XXXIV

If this great world of joy and pain
Revolve in one sure track;

If freedom, set, will rise again,
And virtue, flown, come back;

Woe to the purblind crew who fill
The heart with each day's care;

Nor gain, from past or future, skill
To bear, and to forbear!

1833.

D.D.

XXXV
THE LABOURER'S NOON-DAY
HYMN

Up to the throne of God is borne
The voice of praise at early morn.
And he accepts the punctual hymn
Sung as the light of day grows diu.

Nor will he turn his ear aside
From holy offerings at noontide.
Then here reposing let us raise
A song of gratitude and praise.

What though our burthen be not light
We need not toil from morn to night;
The respite of the mid-day hour
Is in the thankful Creature's power.

Blest are the moments, doubly blest,
That, drawn from this one hour of rest,
Are with a ready heart bestowed
Upon the service of our God!

Each field is then a hallowed spot,
An altar is in each man's cot.
A church in every grove that spreads
Its living roof above our heads.

Look up to Heaven! the industrious Sun
Already half his race hath run;
He cannot halt nor go astray,
But our immortal Spirits may.

Lord! since his rising in the East,
If we have faltered or transgressed,
Guide, from thy love's abundant source,
What yet remains of this day's course:

Help with thy grace, through life's short
day,

Our upward and our downward way;
And glorify for us the west,
When we shall sink to final rest.

1834.

XXXVI
ODE.

COMPOSED ON MAY MORNING

WHILE from the purpling east departs
The star that led the dawn,
Blithe Flora from her couch upstarts,
For May is on the lawn.

A quickening hope, a freshening glee,
Foreran the expected Power,
Whose first-drawn breath, from bush and
tree,

Shakes off that pearly shower.

All Nature welcomes Her whose sway
Tempers the year's extremes:

Who scattereth lustres o'er noon-day,
Like morning's dewy gleams;

While mellow warble, sprightly trill,
The tremulous heart excite;

And hums the balmy air to still
The balance of delight.

Time was, blest Power! when youths and
maids

At peep of dawn would rise,
And wander forth, in forest glades
Thy birth to solemnize.

Though mute the song—to grace the rite
Untouched the hawthorn bough,
Thy Spirit triumphs o'er the slight;
Man changes, but not Thou!

Thy feathered Lieges bill and wings!
In love's disport employ;
Warmed by thy influence, creeping things
Awake to silent joy:

Queen art thou still, for each gay plant
Where the slim wild deer roves;
And served in depths where fishes haunt
Their own mysterious groves.

Cloud-piercing peak, and trackless heath,
Instinctive homage pay;
Nor wants the dim-lit cave a wreath
To honour thee, sweet May!
Where cities fanned by thy brisk airs
Behold a smokeless sky,
Their puniest flower-pot-nursling dares
To open a bright eye.

And if, on this o' natal morn,
The pole, from which thy name
Hath not departed, stands forlorn
Of song and dance and game;
Still from the village green a vow
Aspires to thee address,
Wherever peace is on the brow,
Or love within the breast.

Yes! where Love nestles thou canst teach
The soul to love the more;
Hearts also shall thy lessons reach
That never loved before.
Stript is the haughty one of pride,
The bashful freed from fear,
While rising, like the ocean-tide,
In flows the joyous year.

Hush, feeble lyre! weak words refuse
The service to prolong!
To yon exulting thrush the Muse
Entrusts the imperfect song:
His voice shall chant, in accents clear,
Throughout the live-long day,
Till the first silver star appear,
The sovereignty of May.

1826.

XXXVII
TO MAY

THOUGH many suns have risen and set
Since thou, blithe May, wert born,
And Bards, who hailed thee, may forget
Thy gifts, thy beauty scorn;
There are who to a birthday strain
Confine not harp and voice,
But evermore throughout thy reign
Are grateful and rejoice!

Delicious odours ! music sweet,
Too sweet to pass away !
Oh for a deathless song to meet
The soul's desire—a lay
That, when a thousand years are told,
Should praise thee, genial Power !
Through summer heat, autumnal cold,
And winter's dearest hour.

Earth, sea, thy presence feel—nor less,
If yon ethereal blue
With its soft smile the truth express,
The heavens have felt it too.
The inmost heart of man is glad
Partakes : if cheer
And eyes that cannot but be sad
Let fall a brightened tear.

Since thy return, through days and weeks
Of hope that grew by stealth,
How many wan and faded cheeks
Have kindled into health !

The Old, by thee revived, have said,
" Another year is ours ; "

And wayworn Wanderers, poorly fed,
Have smiled upon thy flowers.

Who tripping lips a merry song
Amid his playful peers ?

The tender Infant who was long
A prisoner of fond fears ;

But, now, when every sharp-edged blast
Is quiet in its sheath,

His Mother leaves him free to taste
Earth's sweetness in thy breath.

Thy help is with the weed that creeps
Along the humblest ground :

No cliff so bare but on its steep
Thy favours may be found ;

But most on some peculiar nook
That our own hands have drest,

Thou and thy train are proud to look,
And seem to love it best.

And yet how pleased we wander forth
When May is whispering, " Come !

" Choose from the bowers of virgin earth
" The happiest for your home ;

" Heaven's bounteous love through me
is spread

" From sunshine, clouds, winds, waves,
" Drops on the mouldering turret's head.

" And on your turf-clad graves ! "

Such greeting heard, away with sighs
For lilies that must fade,

Or " the rattle primrose as it dies
Forsaken " in the shade !

Vernal fruitions and desires
Are linked in endless chase :

While, as one kindly growth retires,
Another takes its place.

And what if thou, sweet May, hast known
Mishap by worm and blight ;

If expectations newly blown

Have perished in thy sight ;
If loves and joys, while up they sprung,
Were caught as in a snare ;
Such is the lot of all the young,
However bright and fair.

Lo ! Streams that April could not check
Are patient of thy rule ;

Gugling in foamy water-break,
Loitering in glassy pool :

By thee, thee only, could be sent
Such gentle mists as glide,

Curling with unconformed intent,
On that green mountain's side.

How delicate the leafy veil

Through which yon house of God
Gleams 'mid the peace of this deep dale

By few but shepherds trod !
And lowly huts, near beaten ways,

No sooner stand attired
In thy fresh wreaths, than they for praise

Peep forth, and are admired.

Season of fancy and of hope,

Permit not for one hour,
A blossom from thy crown to drop,

Nor add to it a flower !
Keep, lovely May, as if by touch

Of self-restraining art,
This modest charm of not too much.

Part seen, imagined part !

1826-1834.

XXXVIII

LINES

SUGGESTED BY A PORTRAIT FROM THE PENCIL OF
I. STONE

BEGUILED into forgetfulness of care
Due to the day's unfinished task ; of pen

Or book regardless, and of that fair scene
In Nature's prodigality displayed

Before my window, oftentimes and long
I gaze upon a Portrait whose mild gleam

Of beauty never ceases to enrich
The common light ; whose stillness

Charms the air,
Or seems to charm it, into like repose :

Whose silence, for the pleasure of the ear,
Surpasses sweetest music. There she sits

With emblematic purity attired
In a white vest, white as her marble neck

Is, and the pillar of the throat would be
But for the shadow by the drooping chin

Cast into that recess—the tender shade,
The shade and light, both there and every

where,
And through the very atmosphere she

breathes,
Broad, clear, and toned harmoniously,

with skill
That might from nature have been learnt

in the hour

When the lone shepherd sees the morning
 spread
 Upon the mountains. Look at her, who-
 e'er
 Thou be that, kindling with a poet's soul,
 Hast loved the painter's true Promethean
 craft
 Intensely—from Imagination take
 The treasure,—what mine eyes behold
 see thou,
 Even though the Atlantic ocean roll
 between.

A silver line, that runs from brow to
 crown
 And in the middle parts the braided hair,
 Just serves to show how delicate a soil
 The golden harvest grows in; and those
 eyes,
 Soft and capacious as a cloudless sky
 Whose azure depth their colour emulates,
 Must needs be conversant with upward
 looks,
 Prayer's voiceless service; but now, seek-
 ing nought
 And shunning nought, their own peculiar
 life
 Of motion they renounce, and with the
 head
 Partake its inclination towards earth
 In humble grace, and quiet pensiveness
 Caught at the point where it stops short
 of sadness.

Offspring of soul-bewitching Art, make
 me
 Thy confidant! say, whence derived that
 air
 Of calm abstraction? Can the ruling
 thought
 Be with some lover far away, or one
 Crossed by misfortune, or of doubted
 faith?
 Inapt conjecture! Childhood here, &
 moon
 Crescent in simple loveliness serene,
 Has but approached the gates of woman-
 hood,
 Not entered them; her heart is yet
 unpierced
 By the blind Archer-god; her fancy free:
 The fount of feeling, if unsought else-
 where,
 Will not be found.

Her right hand, as it lies
 Across the slender wrist of the left arm
 Upon her lap reposing, holds—but mark
 How slackly, for the absent mind permits
 No firmer grasp—a little wild-flower,
 joined
 As in a posy, with a few pale ears
 Of yellowing corn, the same that over-
 topped

And in their common birthplace sheltered
 it
 Till they were plucked together; a blue
 flower
 Called by the thrifty husbandman a weed:
 But Ceres, in her garland, might have
 worn
 That ornament, unblamed. The floweret,
 held
 In scarcely conscious fingers, was, she
 knows,
 (Her Father told her so) in youth's gay
 dawn
 Her Mother's favorite, and the orphan
 Girl.
 In her own dawn—(dawn less gay and
 bright,
 Leaves it, while there in solitary peace
 She sits, for that departed Mother's sake.
 —Not from a source less sacred is derived
 (Surely I do not err) that pensive air
 Of calm abstraction through the face
 diffused
 And the whole person.

Words have something told
 More than the pencil can, and verily
 More than is needed, but the precious Art
 Forgives their interference—Art divine,
 That both creates and fixes, in despite
 Of Death and Time, the marvels it hath
 wrought.

Strange contrasts have we in this world
 of ours!
 That posture, and the look of filial love
 Thinking of past and gone, with what is
 left
 Dearly united, might be swept away
 From this fair Portrait's fleshly Arche-
 type,
 Even by an innocent fancy's slightest
 freak
 Banished, nor ever, haply, be restored
 To their lost place, or meet in harmony
 So exquisite; but here do they abide,
 Enshrined for ages. Is not then the Art
 Godlike, a humble branch of the divine,
 In visible quest of immortality,
 Stretched forth with trembling hope?—
 In every realm,
 From high Gibraltar to Siberian plains,
 Thousands, in each variety of tongue
 That Europe knows, would echo this
 appeal;
 One above all, a Monk who waits on God
 In the magnificent Convent built of yore
 To sanctify the Escorial palace He—
 Guiding, from cell to cell and room to
 room,
 A British Painter (eminent for truth
 In character, and depth of feeling, shown
 By labours that have touched the hearts
 of kings.

And are endeared to simple cottagers) —
 Came, in that service, to a glorious work,
 Our Lord's Last Supper, beautiful ^{is}
 when first
 The appropriate Picture, fresh from
 Titian's hand,
 Graced the Refectory : and there, while
 both
 Stood with eyes fixed upon that master-
 piece,
 The hoary Father in the Stranger's ear
 Breathed out these words : — " Here daily
 do we sit
 Thanks given to God for daily bread, and
 here
 Pondering the mischiefs of these restless
 times,
 And thinking of my Brethren, dead, dis-
 persed,
 Or changed and changing, I not seldom
 gaze
 Upon this solemn company unmoved
 By shock of circumstance, or lapse of
 years.
 Until I cannot but believe that they —
 They are in truth the Substance, we the
 Shadows."

So spake the mild Jeronimite, his griefs
 Melting away within him like a dream
 Ere he had ceased to gaze, perhaps to
 speak :
 And I, grown old, but in a happier land,
 Domestic Portrait ! have to verse con-
 signed
 In thy calm presence those heart-moving
 words :
 Words that can soothe, more than they
 agitate :
 Whose spirit, like the angel that went
 down
 Into Bethesda's pool, with healing virtue
 Informs the fountain in the human breast
 Which by the visitation was disturbed.
 — But why this stealing tear ? Com-
 panion mute,
 On thee I look, not sorrowing ; fare thee
 well,
 My Song's Inspirer, once again farewell !

1834.

XXXIX

THE FOREGOING SUBJECT RESUMED
 AMONG a grave Fraternity of Monks,
 For One, but surely not for One alone,
 Triumphs, in that great work, the
 Painter's skill,

1 The pile of buildings, composing the palace
 and convent of San Lorenzo, has, in common usage,
 lost its proper name in that of the *Escorial*, a
 village at the foot of the hill upon which the
 splendid edifice, built by Philip II, stands. It
 need scarcely be added, that Wilkie is the
 painter alluded to.

Humbling the body, to exalt the soul ;
 Yet representing, amid wreck and wrong
 And dissolution and decay, the warm
 And breathing life of flesh, as if already
 clothed with impassive majesty, and
 graced
 With no mean earnest of a heritage
 Assigned to it in future worlds. Thou,
 too,
 With thy memorial flower, meek Por-
 traiture !
 From whose serene companionship I
 passed
 Pursued by thoughts that haunt me still ;
 thou also —
 Though but a simple object, into light
 Called forth by those affections that en-
 dear
 The private hearth : though keeping thy
 sole seat
 In singleness, and little tried by time,
 Creation, as it were, of yesterday —
 With a congenial function art endued
 For each and all of us, together joined
 In course of nature under a low roof
 By charities and duties that proceed
 Out of the bosom of a wiser vow.
 To a like salutary sense of awe
 Or sacred wonder, growing with the power
 Of meditation that attempts to weigh,
 In faithful scales, things and their oppo-
 sites,
 Can thy enduring quiet gently raise
 A household small and sensitive, — whose
 love,
 Dependent as in part its blessings are
 Upon frail ties dissolving or dissolved
 On earth, will be revived, we trust, in
 heaven.²

1834.

XL

So fair, so sweet, withal so sensitive,
 Would that the little Flowers were born
 to live,
 Conscious of half the pleasure which they
 give ;

That to this mountain-daisy's self were
 known

2 In the class entitled "Musings," in Mr.
 Southey's Minor Poems, is one upon his own
 miniature Picture, taken in childhood, and an-
 other upon a landscape painted by Gaspar Pou-
 sin. It is possible that every word of the above
 verses, though similar in subject, might have been
 written had the author been unacquainted with
 those beautiful effusions of poetic sentiment.
 But, for his own satisfaction, he must be allowed
 thus publicly to acknowledge the pleasure those
 two Poems of his Friend have given him, and
 the grateful influence they have upon his mind
 as often as he reads them, or thinks of them.

The beauty of its star-shaped shadow,
 thrown
 On the smooth surface of this naked stone!
 And what if hence a bold desire should
 mount
 High as the Sun, that he could take
 account
 Of all that issues from his glorious fount!
 So might he ken how by his sovereign aid
 These delicate companionships are made;
 And how he rules the pomp of light and
 shade;
 And were the Sister-power that shines by
 night
 So privileged, what a countenance of
 delight
 Would through the clouds break forth on
 human sight!
 Fond fancies! wheresoe'er shall turn thine
 eye
 On earth, air, ocean, or the starry sky,
 Converse with Nature in pure sympathy;
 All vain desires, all lawless wishes quelled,
 Be Thou to love and praise alike impelled,
 Whatever boon is granted or withheld.

XLI

UPON SEEING A COLOURED DRAWING OF
 THE BIRD OF PARADISE IN AN ALBUM

Who rashly strove thy Image to portray?
 Thou buoyant minion of the tropic air;
 How could he think of the live creature—
 gay
 With a divinity of colours, drest
 In all her brightness, from the dancing
 crest
 Far as the last gleam of the filmy train
 Extended and extending to sustain
 The motions that it graces—and forbear
 To drop his pencil! Flowers of every
 clime

Depicted on these pages smile at time,
 And gorgeous insects copied with nice care
 Are here, and likenesses of many a shell
 Tossed ashore by restless waves,
 Or in the diver's grasp fetched up from
 caves
 Where sea-nymphs might be proud to
 dwell:
 But whose rash hand (again I ask) could
 dare,
 'Mj'd casual tokens and promiscuous
 shows
 To circumscribe this Shape in fixed repose;
 Could imitate for indolent survey
 Perhaps for touch or taste
 Plumes that might catch, but cannot
 keep, a stain;
 And, with cloud-streaks lightest and soft-
 icst, share
 The sun's first greeting, his last farewell
 ray!

Resplendent Wanderer! followed with
 glad eyes
 Where'er her course; mysterious Bird!
 To whom, by wondering Fancy stirred,
 Eastern Islanders have given
 A holy name—the Bird of Heaven
 And even a title higher still,
 The Bird of God! whose blessed will
 She seems performing as she flies
 Over the earth and through the skies
 In never-wearied search of Paradise—
 Region that crowns her beauty with the
 name
 She bears for us—for us how blest,
 How happy at all seasons, could like aim
 Uphold our Spirits urged to kindred flight
 On wings that fear no glance of God's pure
 sight,
 No tempest from his breath, their prom-
 ised rest
 Seeking with indefatigable quest
 Above a world that deems itself most wise
 When most enslaved by gross realities!

1835.

SONNETS DEDICATED TO LIBERTY
 AND ORDER

I

COMPOSED AFTER READING A NEWSPAPER
 OF THE DAY

"PEOPLE! your chains are severing link
 by link;
 Soon shall the Rich be levelled down—
 the Poor
 Meet them half way." Vain boast! for
 These, the more

They thus would rise, must low and lower
 sink
 Till, by repentance stung, they fear to
 think;
 While all lie prostrate, save the tyrant
 Bent in quick turns each other to undo,
 And mix the poison, they themselves must
 drink.
 Mistrust thyself, vain Country! cease to
 cry,

"Knowledge will save me from the threatened woe."
For, if than other rash ones more thou know,
Yet on presumptuous wing as far would fly
Above thy knowledge as they dared to go,
Thou wilt provoke a heavier penalty.

II

UPON THE LATE GENERAL FAST

MARCH, 1842

RELUCTANT call it War; the rite delayed;
And in the Senate since there were who
dodged
The list of their humanity, and scoffed
At providential judgments, unobscured
By their own daring. But the People
prayed
As with one voice; their flinty heart grew
soft
With penitential sorrow, and aloft
Their spirit mounted, crying, "God us
aid!"
Oh that with aspirations more intense,
Chastised by self-abasement more profound,
This People, once so happy, so renowned
For liberty, would seek from God defence
Against far heavier ill, the pestilence
Of revolution, impiously unbound!

III

SAID Secrecy to Cowardice and Fraud,
Falsehood and Treachery, in close council met,
Deep under ground, in Pluto's cabinet,
"The frost of England's pride will soon
be thawed;
"Hooded the open brow that overawed
"Our schemes; the faith and honour,
never yet
"By us with hope encountered, be upset;
"For once I burst my bands, and cry,
apprehend!"
Then whispered she, "The Bill is carrying out!"
They heard, and, starting up, the Brood
of Night
Clapped hands, and shook with glee their
matted locks;
All Powers and Places that abhor the light,
Joined in the transport, echoed back
their shout,
Hurrah for —, hugging his Ballot-box!

IV

Best Statesman He, whose Mind's
unselfish will
Leaves him at ease among grand
thoughts: whose eye
Sees that, apart from magnanimity,

Wisdom exists not; nor the humbler skill
Of Prudence, disentangling good and ill
With patient care. What tho' assaults
run high,
They daunt not him who holds his ministry,
Resolute, at all hazards, to fulfil
Its duties:—prompt to move, but firm
to wait—
Knowing, things rashly sought are rarely
found;
That, for the functions of an ancient
State—
Strong by her charters, free because im-
bound,
Servant of Providence, not slave of
Fate—
Perilous is sweeping change, all chance
unsound.

V

IN ALLUSION TO VARIOUS RECENT HISTORICAL NOTICES OF THE FRENCH REVOLUTION.

POPULOUS change when History can
appear
As the cool Advocate of foul device;
Reckless audacity extol, and jeer
At consciences perplexed with scruples
nice!
They who bewail not, must abhor, the
sneer
Born of Conceit, Power's blind Idolater;
Or haply sprung from vaunting Cowardice
Betrayed by mockery of holy fear.
Hath it not long been said the wrath of
Man
Works not the righteousness of God? Oh
bend,
Bend, ye Perverse! to judgments from on
High,
Laws that lay under Heaven's perpetual
ban
All principles of action that transcend
The sacred limits of humanity.

VI

CONTINUED

Who ponders National events shall find
An awful balancing of loss and gain,
Joy based on sorrow, good with ill com-
bined,
And proud deliverance issuing out of pain
And direful throes; as if the All-ruling
Mind,
With whose perfection it consists to
ordain
Volcanic burst, earthquake, and hurri-
cane,
Dealt in like sort with feeble human kind
By laws immutable. But woe for him
Who thus deceived shall lend an eager
hand

408 SONNETS DEDICATED TO LIBERTY AND ORDER

To social havoc. Is not Conscience ours,
And Truth, whose eye guilt only can
make dim ;
And Will, whose office, by divine com-
mand,
Is to control and check disordered
Powers ?

VII

CONCLUDED

LONG-FAVoured England ! be not thou
misled
By monstrous theories of alien growth,
Lest alien frenzy seize thee, waxing wroth
Self-smitten till thy garments reek-dyed
red
With thy own blood, which tears in tor-
rents shed
Fail to wash out, tears flowing ere thy
troth
Be plighted, not to ease but sullen sloth,
Or wan despair—the ghost of false hope
fled
Into a shameful grave. Among thy youth,
My Country ! if such warning be held dear,
Then shall a Veteran's heart be thrilled
with joy,
One who would gather from eternal truth,
For time and season, rules that work to
cheer --
Not scourge, to save the People—not des-
troy.

VIII

MEN of the Western World ! in Fate's
dark book
Whence these opprobrious leaves of dire
portent ?
Think ye your British Ancestors forsook
Their native Land, for outrage provident ;
From unsubmitive necks the bridleshook
To give, in their Descendants, freer vent
And wider range to passions turbulent,
To mutual tyranny a deadlier look ?
Nay, said a voice, soft as the south wind's
breath,
Dive through the stormy surface of the
flood
To the great current flowing underneath ;
Explore the countless springs of silent
good ;
So shall the truth be better understood,
And thy grieved Spirit brighten strong in
faith.

IX

TO THE PENNSYLVANIANS

DAYS undefiled by luxury or sloth,
Firm self-denial, manners grave and staid,
Rights equal, laws with cheerfulness
obeyed,
Words that require no sanction from an
oath,

And simple honesty a common growth—
This high repute, with bounteous Nature's
aid,
Won confidence, now ruthlessly betrayed
At will, your power the measure of your
troth !—
All who revere the memory of Penn
Grieve for the land on whose wild woods
his name
Was fondly grafted with a virtuous atm,
Renounced, abandoned by degenerate
Men
For state dishonour black as ever came
To upper air from Mammon's loathsome
den.

AT BOLOGNA, IN REMEMBRANCE OF THE LATE INSURRECTIONS, 1837

Why deceive ourselves ! by no mere fit
Of sudden passion roused, shall men attain
True freedom where far apts they have
lain
Bound in a dark abominable pit,
With life's best mineys more and more
unknit.
Here, there, a banded few who foathe the
chain
May rise to break it : effort worse than
vain
For thee, O great Italian nation, split
Into those jarring fractions—Let thy
scope
Be one fixed mind for all ; thy rights
approve
To thy own conscience gradually renewed ;
Learn to make Time the father of wise
Hope ;
Then trust thy cause to the arm of Forti-
tude,
The light of Knowledge, and the warmth
of Love.

XI

CONTINUED

II

HARD task ! exclaim the undisciplined,
to lean
On Patience coupled with such slow
endeavour,
That long-lived servitude must last for
ever.
Perish the grovelling few, who, prest
between
Wrongs and the terror of redress, would
wean
Millions from glorious aims. Our chains
to sever
Let us break forth in tempest now or
never !—

What, is there then no space for golden
mean
gradual progress?—Twilight leads
to day,
And, even within the burning zones of
earth,
The hastiest sunrise yields a temperate
ray:
The softest breeze to fairest flowers gives
birth:
Think not that Prudence dwells in dark
abodes,
She scans the future with the eye of gods.

XII
CONCLUDED
III

As leaves are to the tree when on they
grow
And wither, every human generation
Is to the Being of a mighty nation,
Locked in our world's embrace through
weal and woe;
Thought that should teach the zealot to
forego
Rash schemes, to abjure all selfish agita-
tion,
And seek through noiseless pains and
moderation
The unblemished good they only can
bestow.
Alas! with most, who weigh futurity
Against time present, passion holds the
scales:
Hence equal ignorance of both prevails,
And nations sink; or, struggling to be
free,
Are doomed to flounder on, like wounded
whales
Tossed on the bosom of a stormy sea.

XIII

YOUNG England—what is then become of
Old
dear Old England? Think they she
is dead,
Dead to the very name? Presumption
On empty air! That name will keep its
hold
In the true filial bosom's inmost fold
Forever—The Spirit of Alfred, at the head
Of all, who for her rights watch'd, toil'd
and bled,
Knows that this prophecy is not too bold.
What—how! shall she submit in will and
deed
To Beardless Boys—an imitative race,
The *seruum pecus* of a Gallic breed?
Dear Mother! if thou must thy steps re-
trace,
Go where at least meek Innocency dwells;
Let Babes and Sucklings be thy oracles.

XIV

FEEL for the wrongs to universal ken
Dearly exposed, woe that unshrouded lies;
And seek the Sufferer in his darkest den,
Whether conducted to the spot by sighs
And moanings, or he dwells (as if the wren
Taught him concealment) hidden from all
eyes
In silence and the awful modesties
Of sorrow:—feel for all, as brother Men!
Rest not in hope want's icy chain to thaw
By casual boons and formal charities;
Learn to be just, just through impartial
law:
Far as ye may, erect and equalise;
And, what ye cannot reach by statute,
draw
Each from his fountain of self-sacrifice!

SONNETS UPON THE PUNISHMENT OF DEATH

IN SERIES

I

SUGGESTED BY THE VIEW OF LANCASTER
CASTLE (ON THE ROAD FROM THE
SOUTH)
THIS Spot—at once—unfolding sight so
fair
Of sea and land, with yon grey towers
that still
Rise up as if to lord it over air—
Might soothe in human breasts the sense
of ill,
Or charm it out of memory; yea, might
fill
The heart with joy and gratitude to God

For all his bounties upon man bestowed:
Why bears it then the name of "Weep-
ing Hill"?
Thousands, as toward yon old Lancas-
trian Towers,
A prison's crown, along this way they
past
For lingering durance or quick death
with shame,
From this bare eminence thereon have
cast
Their first look—blinded as tears fell in
showers
Shed on their chains; and hence that
doleful name.

II

TENDERLY do we feel by Nature's law
 For worst offenders: though the heart
 will heave
 With indignation, deeply moved we
 grieve,
 In after thought, for Him who stood in
 awe
 Neither of God nor man, and only saw,
 Lost wretch, a horrible device enthroned
 On proud temptations, till the victim
 groaned
 Under the steel his hand had dared to
 draw.
 But O, restrain compassion, if its course,
 As oft befalls, prevent or turn aside
 Judgments and aims and acts whose
 higher source
 Is sympathy with the unforewarned, who
 died
 Blameless—with them that shuddered
 o'er his grave,
 And all who from the law firm safety
 crave.

III

THE Roman Consul doomed his sons to die
 Who had betrayed their country. The
 stern word
 Afforded (may it through all time afford)
 A theme for praise and admiration high.
 Upon the surface of humanity
 He rested not; its depths his mind
 explored:
 He felt: but his parental bosom's lord
 Was Duty—Duty calmed his agony.
 And some, we know, when they by wilful
 act
 A single human life have wrongly taken,
 Pass sentence on themselves, confess the
 fact,
 And, to atone for it, with soul unshaken
 Kneel at the feet of Justice, and, for faith
 Broken with all mankind, solicit death.

IV

Is *Death*, when evil against good has
 fought
 With such fell mastery that a man may
 dare
 By deeds the blackest purpose to lay
 bare?
 Is *Death*, for one to that condition
 brought,
 For him, or any one, the thing that
 ought
 To be most dreaded? Lawgivers, be-
 ware,
 Lest, capital pains remitting till ye spare
 The murderer, ye, by sanction to that
 thought
 Seemingly given, debase the general
 mind;

Tempt the vague will tried standards to
 disown.
 Nor only palpable restraints unbind,
 But upon Honour's head disturb the
 crown,
 Whose absolute rule permits not to with-
 stand
 In the weak love of life his least command.

V

NOR to the object specially designed,
 Howe'er momentous in itself it be,
 Good to promote or curb depravity,
 Is the wise Legislator's view confined.
 His Spirit, when most severe, is oft most
 kind;
 As all Authority in earth depends
 On Love and Fear, their several powers
 he blends.
 Copying with awe the one Paternal mind.
 Uncaught by processes in show humane,
 He feels how far the act would derogate
 From even the humblest functions of the
 State:
 If she, self-shorn of Majesty, ordain
 That never more shall hang upon her
 breath
 The last alternative Of Life or Death.

VI

YE brood of conscience—Spectres! that
 frequent
 The bad Man's restless walk, and haunt
 his bed—
 Fiends in your aspect, yet beneficent
 In act, as hovering Angels when they
 spread
 Their wings to guard the unconscious
 Innocent—
 Slow be the Statutes of the land to share
 A laxity that could not but impair
 Your power to punish crime, and so pre-
 vent.
 And ye, Beliefs! coiled serpent-like about
 The adage on all tongues, "Murder will
 out,"
 How shall your ancient warnings work
 for good
 In the full might they hitherto have
 shown,
 If for deliberate shedder of man's blood
 Survive not Judgment that requires his
 own?

VII

BEFORE the world had past her time of
 youth.
 While polity and discipline were weak,
 The precept eye for eye, and tooth for
 tooth,
 Came forth—a light, though but as of
 day-break,
 Strong as could then be borne. A Master
 meek

Proscribed the spirit fostered by that rule,
 Patience *his* law, long-suffering *his*
 school,
 And love the end, which all through
 peace must seek.
 But lamentably do they err who strain
 His mandates, given rash impuls to
 controul
 And keep vindictive thirstings from the
 soul,
 So far that, if consistent in their scheme,
 They must forbid the State to inflict a
 pain,
 Making of social order, a mere dream.

VIII

Fit retribution, by the moral code
 Determined, lies beyond the State's
 embrace;
 Yet as she may, for each peculiar case
 She plants well-measured terrors in the
 road
 Of wrongful acts. Downward it is and
 broad,
 And, the main fear once doomed to
 banishment,
 Far oftener then, had ushering worse
 event,
 Blood would be spilt that in his dark
 abode
 Crime might lie better hid. And, should
 the change
 Take from the horror due to a foul deed,
 Pursuit and evidence so far must fail,
 And, guilt escaping, passion then might
 plead
 In angry spirits for her old free range,
 And the "wild justice of revenge" pre-
 vail.

IX

THOUGH to give timely warning and
 deter
 Is one great aim of penalty, extend
 Thy mental vision further and ascend
 Far higher, else full surely shalt thou err.
 What is a State? The wise behold in her
 A creature born of time, that keeps one
 eye
 Fixed on the statutes of Eternity,
 To which her judgments reverently defer.
 Speaking through Law's dispassionate
 voice the State
 Endues her conscience with external life
 And being, to preclude or quell the strife
 Of individual will, to elevate
 The grovelling mind, the erring to recal,
 And fortify the moral sense of all.

X

Of a bodily life, some plead, that life the
 shrine
 Of an immortal spirit, is a gift

So sacred, so informed with light divine,
 That no tribunal, though most wise to sift
 Deed and intent, should turn the Being
 / adrift
 Into that world where penitential tear
 May not avail, nor prayer have for God's
 ear
 A voice—that world whose veil no hand
 can lift
 For earthly sight. "Eternity and Time,"
 They urge, "have interwoven claims and
 rights
 Not to be jeopardised through foulest
 crime:
 The sentence rule by mercy's heaven-
 born lights."
 Even so: but measuring not by finite
 sense
 Infinite Power, perfect Intelligence—

XI

Ah, think how one compelled for life to
 abide
 Locked in a dungeon needs must eat the
 heart
 Out of his own humanity, and part
 With every hope that mutual cares pro-
 vide:
 And, should a less unnatural doom con-
 fide
 In life-long exile on a savage coast,
 Soon the relapsing penitent may boast
 Of yet more heinous guilt, with fiercer
 pride.
 Hence thoughtful Mercy, Mercy sage and
 pure,
 Sanctions the forfeiture that Law de-
 mands,
 Leaving the final issue in *His* hands
 Whose goodness knows no change, whose
 love is sure,
 Who sees, foresees: who cannot judge
 amiss,
 And waits at will the contrite soul to
 bliss.

XII

SEE the Condemned alone within his cell
 And prostrate at some moment when
 remorse
 Stings to the quick, and, with resistless
 force,
 Assaults the pride she strove in vain to
 quell.
 Then mark him, him who could so long
 rebel,
 The crime confessed, a kneeling Penitent
 Before the Altar, where the Sacrament
 Softens his heart, till from his eyes out-
 well
 Tears of salvation. Welcome death!
 while Heaven
 Does in this change exceedingly rejoice;

While yet the solemn heed the State hath
 given
 Helps him to meet the last Tribunal's
 voice
 In faith, which fresh offences, were by
 On old temptations, might for ever blast.

XIII

CONCLUSION

Yes, though He well may tremble at the
 sound
 Of his own voice, who from the judgment-
 seat
 Sends the pale Convict to his last retreat
 In death; though Listeners shudder all
 around,
 They know the dread requital's source
 profound;
 Nor as, they feel, its wisdom obsolete—
 (Would that it were!) the sacrifice unmeet
 For Christian Faith. But hopeful signs
 abound;
 The social rights of man breathe purer
 air;
 Religion deepens her preventive care;
 Then, moved by needless fear of past
 abuse,
 Strike not from Law's firm hand that
 awful rod,

But leave it thence to drop for lack of use:
 Oh, speed the blessed hour, Almighty
 God!

XIV

APOLOGY

THE formal World relaxes her cold chain
 For One who speaks in numbers; ampler
 scope
 His utterance finds; and, conscious of
 the gain
 Imagination works with bolder hope
 The cause of grateful reason to sustain;
 And, service Truth, the heart, more
 strongly beats
 Against all barriers, which his labour
 meets
 In lofty place, or humble Life's domain.
 Enough;—before us lay a painful road,
 And guidance have I sought in duteous
 love
 From Wisdom's heavenly Father. Hence
 hath flowed
 Patience, with trust that, whatsoe'er the
 way
 Each takes in this high matter, all may
 move
 Cheered with the prospect of a brighter
 day.

1840.

MISCELLANEOUS POEMS

I

EPISTLE

TO SIR GEORGE HOWLAND BEAUMONT,
 BART.

FROM THE SOUTH-WEST COAST OF CUMBERLAND.
 —1811.

FAR from our home by Grasmere's quiet
 Lake,
 From the Vale's peace which all her fields
 partake,
 Here on the bleakest point of Cumbria's
 shore
 We sojourn stunned by Ocean's ceaseless
 roar;
 While, day by day, grim neighbour!
 huge Black Comb
 Frowns deepening visibly his native
 gloom,
 Unless, perchance rejecting in despite
 What on the Plain we have of warmth
 and light,
 In his own storms he hides himself from
 sight.
 Rough is the time; and thoughts, that
 would be free
 From heaviness, oft fly, dear Friend, to
 thee;
 Turn from a spot where neither sheltered
 road

Nor hedge-row screen invites my steps
 abroad;
 Where one poor Plane-tree, having as it
 might
 Attained a stature twice a tall man's
 height,
 Hopeless of further growth, and brown
 and sere
 Through half the summer, stands with
 top cut sheer,
 Like an unshifting weathercock which
 proves
 How cold the quarter that the wind best
 loves,
 Or like a Centinel that, evermore
 Darkening the window, ill defends the
 door
 Of this unfinished house—a Fortress bare,
 Where strength has been the Builder's
 only care;
 Whose rugged walls may still for years
 demand
 The final polish of the Plasterer's hand.
 —This Dwelling's Inmate more than
 three weeks' space
 And oft a Prisoner in the cheerless place,
 I—of whose touch the fiddle would com-
 plain,
 Whose breath would labour at the flute
 in vain,

In music all unversed, nor blessed with skill

A bridge to copy, or to paint a mill,
Tired of my books, a scanty company !
And tired of listening to the boisterous sea—

Pace between door and window muttering rhyme,

An old resource to cheat a froward time !
Though these dull hours (mine is it, or their shame ?)

Would tempt me to renounce that humble aim.

—But if there be a Muse who, free to take
Her seat upon Olympus, doth forsake
Those heights (like Phœbus when his golden locks

He veiled, attendant on Thessalian flocks.)

And, in disguise, a Milkmaid with her pail

Trips down the pathways of some winding dale ;

Or, like a Mermaid, warbles on the shore
To fishers mending nets beside their doors :

Or, Pilgrim-like, on forest moss reclined,
Gives plaintive ditties to the heedless wind.

Or listens to its play among the boughs
Above her head and so forgets her vows—
Is such a Visitant of Earth there be
And she would deign this day to smile on me

And aid my verse, content with local bounds

Of natural beauty and life's daily rounds,
Thoughts, chances, sights, or doings which we tell

Without reserve to those whom we love well—

Then haply, Beaumont ! words in current clear

Will flow, and on a welcome page appear
Duly before thy sight, unless they perish here.

What shall I treat of ? News from Mona's Isle ?

Such have we, but unvaried in its style ;
No tales of Runagates fresh landed, whence

And wherefore fugitive or on what pretence ;

Of feasts, or scandal, eddying like the wind

Most restlessly alive when most confined.

Ask not of me, whose tongue can best appease

The mighty tumults of the House of Keys ;

The last year's cup whose Ram or Heifer gained,

What slopes are planted, or what mosses drained :

An eye of fancy only can I cast
On that proud pageant now at hand or past,

When full five hundred boats in trim array

With nets and sails outspread and streamers gay,

And charmed hymns and stiller voice of prayer,

For the old Manx-harvest to the Deep repair,

Soon as the herring-shoals at distance [shine
Like beds of moonlight shifting on the brine.

Mona from our Abode is daily seen,
But with a wilderness of waves between ;

And by conjecture only can we speak
Of aught transacted there in bay or creek :

No tidings reach us thence from town or field,

Only faint news her mountain sunbeams yield,

And some we gather from the misty air,
And some the hovering clouds, our telegraph, declare.

But these poetic mysteries I withhold ;
For Fancy hath her fits both hot and cold,

And should the colder fit with You be on
When You might read, my credit would be gone.

Let more substantial themes the pen engage,

And nearer interests culled from the opening stage

Of our migration.—Ere the welcome dawn

Had from the east her silver star withdrawn,

The Wain stood ready, at our Cottage-door.

Thoughtfully freighted with a various store ;

And long ere ere the uprising of the Sun
O'er dew-damp'd dust our journey was begun,

A needful journey, under favouring skies,
Through peopled Vales ; yet something in the guise

Of those old Patriarchs when from well to well

They roamed through Wastes where now the tented Arabs dwell.

Say first, to whom did we the charge confide,

Who promptly undertook the Wain to guide

Up many a sharply-twining road and down,

And over many a wide hill's craggy
crown,
Through the quick turns of many a hollow
nook,
And the rough bed of many an unbridled
brook?

A blooming Lass—who in her better hand
Bore a light switch, her sceptre of command

When, yet a slender Girl, she often led,
Skilful and bold, the horse and burthened
sled¹

From the peat-yielding Moss on Gowdar's
head.

What could go wrong with such a Charioteer

For goods and chattels, or those Infants
dear,

A Pair who smilingly sate side by side,
Our hope confirming that the salt-sea tide,
Whose free embraces we were bound to
seek,

Would their lost strength restore and
freshen the pale cheek?

Such hope did either Parent entertain
Pacing behind along the silent lane.

Blithe hopes and happy musings soon
took flight,

For lo! an uncouth melancholy sight—
On a green bank a creature stood forlorn
Just half protruded to the light of morn,
Its hinder part concealed by hedge-row
thorn.

The Figure called to mind a beast of prey
Striped with its frightful powers by slow
decay,

And, though no longer upon rapine bent,
Dim memory keeping of its old intent.

We started, looked again with anxious
eyes,

And in that grisly object recognise
The Curate's Dog—his long-tried friend,
for they,

As well we knew, together had grown
grey.

The Master died, his drooping servant's
grief

Found at the Widow's feet some sad relief;

Yet still he lived in pining discontent,
Sadness which no indulgence could prevent;

Hence whole day wanderings, broke up
nightly sleeps

And lonesome watch that out of doors he
keeps;

Not oftentimes, I trust, as we, poor brute!
Espied him on his legs sustained, blank,
mute,

And of all visible motion destitute,
that the very heaving of his breath

Turn from :
road A local word for Sledge.

Seemed stopt, though by some other
power than death.

Long as we gazed upon the form and face,
A mild domestic pity kept its place,
Unscared by thronging fancies of strange
hue

That haunted us in spite of what we knew.
Even now I sometimes think of him as
lost

In second-sight appearances, or crost
By spectral shapes of guilt, or to the
ground,

On which he stood, by spells unnatural
bound,

Like a guttish aggy Porter forced to
wait

In days of old romance at Archimago's
gate.

Advancing Summer, Nature's law fulfilled,

The choristers in every grove had stilled ;
But we, we lacked not music of our own,
For lightsome Fanny had thus early
thrown,

Mid the gay prattle of those infant
tongues,

Some notes prelusive, from the round of
songs

With which, more zealous than the liveliest
bird

That in wild Arden's brakes was ever
heard,

Her work and her work's partners she can
cheer,

The whole day long, and all days of the
year.

Thus gladdened from our own dear
Vale we pass

And soon approach Diana's Looking-
glass!

To Loughrigg-tarn, round clear and
bright as heaven,

Such name Italian fancy would have
given,

Ere on its banks the few grey cabins rose
That yet disturb not its concealed repose

More than the feeblest wind that idly
blows.

Ah, Beaumont! when an opening in
the road

Stopped me at once by charm of what it
showed,

The encircling region vividly exprest
Within the mirror's depth, a world at
rest—

Sky streaked with purple, grove and
craggy field,²

And the smooth green of many a pendent
field,

² A word common in the country, signifying
shelter, as in Scotland.

And, quieted and soothed, a torrent small,
 A little dashing would-be waterfall,
 One chimney smoking and its azure
 wreath,
 Associate all in the calm Pool beneath,
 With here and there a faint imperfect
 gleam
 Of water-lilies veiled in misty steam—
 What wonder at this hour of stillness
 deep,
 A shadowy link 'tween wakefulness and
 sleep,
 When Nature's self, amid such blending,
 seems
 To render visible her own soft dreams,
 If, mixed with what appeared of rock,
 lawn, wood,
 Fondly embosomed in the tranquil flood,
 A glimpse I caught of that Abode, by
 The
 Designed to rise in humble privacy,
 A lowly Dwelling, here to be outspread,
 Like a small Hamlet, with its bashful
 head
 Half hid in native trees. Ah! 'tis not,
 Nor ever was; I sighed, and left the spot
 Unconscious of its own untoward lot,
 And thought in silence, with regret too
 keen,
 Of unexperienced joys that might have
 Of neighbourhood and intermingling arts,
 And golden summer days uniting cheer-
 ful hearts.
 But time, irrevocable time, is flown,
 And let us utter thanks for blessings sown
 And reaped—what hath been, and what
 is, our own.

Not far we travelled ere a shout of glee,
 Startling us all, dispersed my reverie;
 Such shout as many a sportive echo meet-
 ing
 Oft-times from Alpine chalets sends a
 greeting.
 Whence the blithe hail? behold a Pea-
 sant stand
 On high, a kerchief waving in her hand!
 Not unexpectant that by early day
 Our little Band would thrid this moun-
 tain way,
 Before her cottage on the bright hill side
 She hath advanced with hope to be des-
 cended.
 Right gladly answering signals we dis-
 played,
 Moving along a tract of morning shade,
 And vocal-wishes sent of like good will
 To our kind Friend high on the sunny
 hill—
 Luminous region, fair as if the prime
 Were tempting all astrife to look aloft or
 climb;
 Only the centre of the shining cot

With door left open makes a gloomy spot,
 Emblem of those dark corners sometimes
 found
 Within the happiest breast on earthly
 ground.
 Rich prospect left behind of stream
 and vale,
 And mountain-tops, a barren ridge we
 scale;
 Descend and reach, in Yewdale's depths,
 a plain
 With haycocks studded, striped with
 yellowing grain—
 An area level as a Lake and spread
 Under a rock too steep for man to tread,
 Where sheltered from the north and bleak
 north-west
 Aloft the Raven hangs a visible nest,
 Fearless of all assaults that would her
 brood molest.
 Hot sunbeams fill the steaming vale; but
 hark.
 At our approach, a jealous watch-dog's
 bark,
 Noise that brings forth no liveried Page
 of state,
 But the whole household, that our
 coming wait.
 With Young and Old warm greetings we
 exchange.
 And jocund smiles, and toward the lowly
 Grange
 Press forward by the teasing dogs un-
 scared.
 Entering, we find the morning meal pre-
 pared:
 So down we sit, though not till each had
 cast
 Pleased looks around the delicate re-
 past—
 Rich cream, and snow-white eggs fresh
 from the nest,
 With amber honey from the mountain's
 breast;
 Strawberries from lane or woodland,
 offering wild
 Of children's industry, in hillocks piled;
 Cakes for the nounce, and butter fit to lie
 Upon a lordly dish; frank hospitality
 Where simple art with bounteous nature
 vied,
 And cottage comfort shunned not seemly
 pride.

Kind Hostess! Handmaid also of the
 feast,
 If thou be lovelier than the kindling East,
 Words by thy presence unrestrained may
 speak
 Of a perpetual dawn from brow and cheek
 Instinct with light whose sweetest pro-
 mise lies,
 Never retiring, in thy large dark eyes.

Dark but to every gentle feeling true,
As if their lustre flowed from ether's
purest blue.

Let me not ask what tears may have
been wept
By those bright eyes, what wifery vigils
kept,
Beside that hearth what sighs may have
been heaved
For wounds inflicted, nor what toil re-
lieved
By fortitude and patience, and the grace
Of heaven in pity visiting the place.
Not unadvisedly those secret springs
I leave unsarched : enough that memory
clings,

Here as elsewhere, to notices that make
Their own significance for hearts awake,
To rural incidents, whose genial powers
Filled with delight three summer morning
hours.

More could my pen report of grave or
gay
That through our gipsy travel cheered
the way ;
But, bursting forth above the waves, the
Sun

Laughs at my pains, and seems to say,
"Be done."
Yet, Beaumont, thou wilt not, I trust,
reprove
This humble offering made by Truth to
Love,
Nor chide the Muse that stooped to break
a spell
Which might have else been on me yet :
FAREWELL.

UPON PERUSING THE FOREGOING EPISTLE
THIRTY YEARS AFTER ITS COM-
POSITION.

Soon did the Almighty Giver of all rest
Take those dear young Ones to a fearless
nest ;
And in Death's arms has long reposed the
Friend
For whom this simple Register was
penned.
Thanks to the moth that spared it for
our eyes ;
And Strangers even the slighted Scroll
may prize,
Moved by the touch of kindred sympho-
nies.
For—save the calm, repentance sheds
o'er strife
Raised by remembrances of misused life,
The light from past endeavours purely
willed
And by Heaven's favour happily fulfilled ;
Save hope that we, yet bound to Earth,
may share

The joys of the Departed—what so fair
As blameless pleasure, not without some
tears,
Reviewed through Love's transparent
veil of years ?

Note.—LOUGHRIFF TARN, alluded to in the foregoing Epistle, resembles, though much smaller in compass, the Lake Nemi, or *Speculum Dianæ* as it is often called, not only in its clear waters and circular form, and the beauty immediately surrounding it, but also as being overlooked by the eminence of Langdale Pikes as Lake Nemi is by that of Monte Calvo. Since this Epistle, as written Loughriff Tarn has lost much of its beauty by the felling of many natural clumps of wood, relics of the old forest, particularly upon the farm called "The Oaks," from the abundance of that tree which grew there.

It is to be regretted, upon public grounds, that Sir George Beaumont did not carry into effect his intention of constructing here a Summer Retreat in the style I have described ; as his taste would have set an example how buildings, with all the accommodations modern society requires, might be introduced even into the most secluded parts of this country without injuring their native character. The design was not abandoned from failure of inclination on his part, but in consequence of local untowardnesses which need not be particularly noted.

II

GOLD AND SILVER FISHES IN A
VASE

The soaring lark is blest as proud
When at heaven's gate she sings ;
The roving bee proclaims aloud
Her flight by vocal wings ;
Whic Ye, in lasting durance pent,
Your silent lives employ
For something more than dull content,
Though haply less than joy.
Yet might your glassy prison seem
A place where joy is known,
Where golden flash and silver gleam
Have meanings of their own ;
While, high and low, and all about,
Your motions, glittering Elves !
Ye weave—no danger from without,
And peace among yourselves.

Type of a sunny human breast
Is your transparent cell ;
Where Fear is but a transient guest,
No sullen Humpours dwell ;
Where, sensitive of every ray
That smites this tiny sea,
Your scaly panoplies repay
The loan with usury.

How beautiful !—Yet none knows why
This ever-graceful change,
Renewed—renewed incessantly—
Within your quiet range.

Is it that ye with conscious skill
For mutual pleasure glide;
And sometimes, not without your will,
Are dwarfed, or magnified?
Fays, Genii of gigantic size!
And now, in twilight dim,
Clustering like constellated eyes,
In wings of Cherubim,
When the fierce orbs abate their glare;
Whate'er your forms express,
Whate'er ye seem, whate'er ye are—
All leads to gentleness.

Cold though your nature be, 'tis pure;
Your birthright is a fender
From all that haughtier knaves endure,
Through tyranny of sense.
Ah! not alone by colours bright
Are ye to heaven allied,
When, like essential Forms of light,
Ye mingle, or divide.
For day-dreams soft as e'er beguiled
Day-thoughts while limbs repose,
For moonlight fascinations mild,
Your gift, ere shutters close
Accept, mute Captives! thanks and
praise;
And may this tribute prove
That gentle admirations raise
Delight resembling love.

1823.

III

LIBERTY

(SEQUEL TO THE ABOVE)

[ADDRESS'D TO A FRIEND: THE GOLD AND
SILVER FISHER HAVING BEEN REMOVED TO
A POOL IN THE PLEASANT-GROUND OF
RYDAL MOUNT]

"The liberty of a people consists in being governed by laws which they have made for themselves, under whatever form it be of government. The liberty of a private man, in being master of his own time and actions, as far as may consist with the laws of God and of his country. Of this latter we are here to discourse."—COWLEY.

Those breathing Tokens of your kind
regard,
(Suspect not, Anna, that their fate is
hard;
Not soon does aught to which mild fa-
cies cling
In lonely spots, become a slighted thing;
Those silent inmates now no longer share,
Nor do they need, our hospitable care,
Removed in kindness from their glassy
Cell
To the fresh waters of a living Well—
A elfin pool so sheltered that its rest
No winds disturb; the mirror of whose
breast

W.P.

Is smooth as clear, save where with
dimples small
A fly may settle, or a blossom fall.
—There swims, of blazing sun and beat-
in, shower
Fearless (but how obscured!) the golden
Power,
That from his bauble prison used to cast
Gleams by the richest jewel unsurpass;
And near him, darkling like a sullen
Gnome,

The silver Tenant of the crystal dome;
Discovered both from all the mysteries
Of hue and altering shape that charmed
all eyes.
Alas! they pined, they languished while
they shone;
And, if not so, what matters beauty gone
And admiration lost, by change of place
That brings to the inward creature no
disgrace?

But if the change restore his birthright,
then,
Whate'er the difference, boundless is the
gain.

Who can divine what impulses from God
Reach the caged lark, within a town-
abode, [sod?
From his poor perch or two of daisied
O yield him back his privilege!—No sea
Swell like the bosom of a man set free;
A wilderness is rich with liberty.

Roll on, ye spouting whales, who die or
keep

Your independence in the fathomless
Deep!

Spread, tiny nautilus, the living sail;
Dive, at thy choice, or brave the freshen-
ing gale!

If unproved the ambitious eagle mount
Sunward to seek the daylight in its fount,
Bays, gulfs, and ocean's Indian width,
shall be,

Till the world perishes, a field for thee!

While musing here I sit in shadow cool,
And watch these mute Companions, in
the pool,

(Among reflected boughs of leafy trees)
By glimpses caught—disporting at their
ease,

Enlivened, braced, by hardy luxuries,
I ask what warrant fixed them (like a
spell

Of witchcraft fixed them) in the crystal
cell;

To wheel with languid motion round and
round,

Beautiful, yet in mournful durance bound.
Their peace, perhaps, our lightest foot-
fall marred;

On their quick sense our sweetest music
jarred;

E E

And whither could they dart, if seized
with fear ?

No sheltering stone, no tangled root was
near.

When fire or taper ceased to cheer the
room,

They wore away the night in starless
gloom ;

And, when the sun first dawned upon the
streams,

How faint their portion of his vital
beams !

Thus, and unable to complain, they fared,
While not one joy of ours by them was
shared.

Is there a cherished bird (I ventured now
To snatch a sprig from Chaucer's rever-
end brow) —

Is there a brilliant fondling of the cage,
Though sure of plaudits on his costly
stage,

Though fed with dainties from the snow-
white hand

Of a kind mistress, fairest of the land,
But gladly would escape ; and, if need
were,

Scatter the colours from the plumes that
bear

The emancipated captive through blithe
air

Into strange woods, where he at large
may live

On best or worst which they and Nature
give ?

The beetle loves his unpretending track,
The snail the house he carries on his back ;

The far-fetched worm with pleasure
would disown

The bed we give him, though of softest
down :

A noble instinct ; in all kinds the same,
All ranks ! What Sovereign, worthy of
the name,

If doomed to breathe against his lawful
will

An element that flatters him—to kill,
But would rejoice to barter outward
show

For the least boon that freedom can
bestow ?

But most the Bard is true to inborn
right,

Lark of the dawn, and Philomel of night,
Exults in freedom, can with rapture
vouch

For the dear blessings of a lowly couch,
A natural meal—days, months, from
Nature's hand :

Time, place, and business, all at his com-
mand !—

Who bends to happier duties, who more
wise

Than the industrious Poet, taught to
prize,

Above all grandeur, a pure life uncrossed
By cares in which simplicity is lost ?

That life—the flowery path that winds
by stealth—

Which Horace needed for his spirit's
health ;

Sighed for, in heart and genius, overcome
By noise and strife, and questions wearisome,

And the vain splendours of Imperial
Rome ?—

Let easy mirth his social hours inspire,
And fiction enliven his sportive lyre.

Attuned to verse that, crowning light
Distress

With garlands, cheats her into happiness ;
Give me the humblest note of those sad
strains

Drawn forth by pressure of his gilded
chains,

As a chance-sunbeam from his memory
fell

Upon the Sabine farm he loved so well ;
Or when the prattle of Blandula's spring
haunted his ear—he only listening—

He proud to please, above all rivals, fit
To win the palm of gaiety and wit :

He, doubt not, with involuntary dread,
Shrinking from each new favour to be
shed,

By the world's Ruler, on his honoured
head !

In a deep vision's intellectual scene,
Such earnest longings and regrets as keen

Depressed the melancholy Cowley, laid
Under a fancied yew-tree's luckless shade ;

A doleful bower for penitential song,
Where Man and Muse complained of
mutual wrong ;

While Cam's ideal current glided by,
And antique towers nodded their fore-
heads high,

Citadels dear to studious privacy,
But Fortune, who had long been used to
sport

With this tried Servant of a thankless
Court,

Relenting met his wishes ; and to you
The remnant of his days at least was true ;

You, whom, though long deserted, he
loved best ;

You, Muses, books, fields, liberty, and
rest !

Far happier they who, fixing hope and
aim

On the humanities of peaceful fame,
Enter betimes with more than martial fire

The generous course, aspire, and still
aspire ;

Upheld by warnings heeded not too late
Stifle the contradictions of their fate,
And to ~~one~~ purpose cleave, their Being's
godlike mate!

Thus, gifted friend, but with the placid
brow
That woman ne'er should forfeit, keep
thy vow;
With modest scorn reject what'er would
blind
The ethereal eyesight, cramp the winged
mind!
Then, with a blessing granted from above
To every act, word, thought, and look of
love,
Life's book for Thee may lie unclosed, till
age
Shall with a thankful tear drop
latest page.¹

1820.

IV

POOR ROBIN²

Now when the primrose makes a splendid
show,
And lilacs face the March-wind in full
blow,
And humbler growths as moved with one
desire
Put on, to welcome spring, their best
attire,
Poor Robin is yet flowerless; but how gay
With his red stalks upon this sunny day!
And, as his tufts of leaves he spreads, con-
tent
With a hard bed and scanty nourishment,
Mixed with the green, some shine not
lacking power
To rival summer's brightest scarlet
flower;

¹ There is now, alas! no possibility of the anticipation, with which the above Epistle concludes, being realised: nor were the verses ever seen by the individual for whom they were intended. She accompanied her husband, the Rev. Wm. Fletcher, to India, and died of cholera, at the age of thirty-two or thirty-three years, on her way from Shalapore to Bombay, deeply lamented by all who knew her.

Her enthusiasm was ardent, her piety steadfast; and her great talents would have enabled her to be eminently useful in the difficult path of life to which she had been called. Her opinion she entertained of her own performances, given to the world under her maiden name, Jewsbury, was modest and humble, and, indeed, far below their merits; as is often the case with those who are making trial of their powers, with a hope to discover what they are best fitted for. In one quality, viz., quickness in the notions of her mind, she had, within the range of the Author's acquaintance, no equal.

² The small wild Geranium known by that name.

And flowers they well might seem to
passers-by
I looked at only with a careless eye:
flowers—or a richer produce (did it suit
The season) sprinklings of ripe strawberry
fruit.

But while a thousand pleasures come
unthought,
Why is upon his wealth or want a
thought?
Is the string touched in prelude to a lay
Of pretty fancies that would round him
play
When all the world acknowledged clasp
sway?
Or does it suit our humour to commend
Poor Robin as a sure and crafty friend,
Whose practice teaches, spite of names
to show
Bright colours whether they deceive or
no?
Nay, we would simply praise the free
good-will
With which, though slighted, he, on
naked hill
Or in warm valley, seeks his part to fill;
Cheerful alike if bare of flowers as now,
Or when his tiny gems shall deck his
brow:
Yet more, we wish that men by men
despised,
And such as lift their foreheads over-
prized,
Should sometimes think, where'er they
chance to spy
This child of Nature's own humility,
What recompense is kept in store or left
For all that seem neglected or bereft:
With what nice care equivalents are given.
How just, how bountiful, the hand of
Heaven.

March, 1840.

V

THE GLEANER

(SUGGESTED BY A PICTURE)

THAT happy gleam of vernal eyes,
Those locks from summer's golden skies,
That o'er thy brow are shed;
That cheek—a-kindling of the morn,
That lip—a rose-bud from the thorn,
I saw; and Fancy sped
To scenes Arcadian, whispering, through
soft air,
Of bliss that grows without a care,
And happiness that never flies—
(How can it where love never dies?)
Whispering of promise, where no blight
Can reach the innocent delight;
Where joy, to the mind conveyed
In pleasure, is the darkest shade
That Time, unwrinkled grandsire, flings
From his smoothly gliding wings.

What mortal form, what earthly face
Inspired the pencil, lines to trace,
And mingle colours, that should breed
Such rapture, nor want power to feed
For had thy charge been idle flowers,
Fair Damsel! o'er my captive and,
To truth and sober reason blind,
'Mid that soft air, those long-lost flowers,
The sweet illusion might have hung, for
hours.

Thanks to this tell-tale sheaf of corn,
That touchingly bespeaks thee born
Life's daily tasks with them to share
Who, whether from their lowly bed
They rise, or rest the weary head,
Ponder the blessing they entreat
From Heaven, and feel what they repeat,
While they give utterance to the prayer
That asks for daily bread.

1828.

VI

TO A REDBREAST (IN SICKNESS)

STAY, little cheerful Robin! stay,
And at my casement sing,
Through it should prove a farewell lay
And this our parting spring.

Though I, alas! may ne'er enjoy
The promise in thy song;
A charm, *that* thought can not destroy,
Doth to thy strain belong.

Methinks that in my dying hour
Thy song would still be dear,
And with a more than earthly power
My passing Spirit cheer.

Then, little Bird, this boon confer,
Come, and my requiem sing,
Nor fail to be the harbinger
Of everlasting Spring.

S. H.

VII

FLOATING ISLAND

These lines are by the Author of the Address to the Wind, etc., published heretofore along with my Poems. The above to a Redbreast are by a deceased female Relative.

HARMONIOUS Powers with Nature work
On sky, earth, river, lake and sea;
Sunshine and cloud, whirlwind and
breeze,
All in one duteous task agree.

Once did I see a slip of earth
(By throbbing waves long undermined)
Loosed from its hold; how, no one knew,
But all might see it float, obedient to the
wind;

Might see it, from the mossy shore
Dissevered, float upon the Lake,

Float with its crest of trees adorned
On which the warbling birds their pas-
time take.

Food, shelter, safety, there they find;
There berries ripen, flowerets bloom;
There insects live their lives, and die;
A peopled world it is: in size a tiny room.

And thus through many seasons' space
This little Island may survive;
But Nature, though we mark her not,
Will take away, may cease to give.

Perchance when you are wandering forth
Upon some pleasant sunny day,
Without an object, hope, or fear,
Thither your eyes may turn—the Isle is
passed away;

Deceit beneath the glittering Lake,
Its place no longer to be found;
Yet the lost fragments shall remain
To fertilize some other ground.

D. W.

VIII

"Late, late yestreen I saw the new moone
Wi' the auld moone in his arme."
Ballad of Sir Patrick Spence, Percy's Reliques.

Once I could hail (how'er serene the sky)
The Moon re-entering her monthly round,
No faculty yet given me to espv
The dusky Shape within her arms im-
boud,
That thim memento of effulgence lost
Which some have named her Predecess-
sor's ghost.

Young, like the Crescent that above me
shone,
Nought I perceived within it dull or dim;
All that appeared was suitable to One
Whose fancy had a thousand fields to
skim;
To expectations spreading with wild
growth,
And hope that kept with me her plighted
troth.

I saw (ambition quickening at the view)
A silver boat launched on a boundless
flood;
A pearly crest, like Dian's when it threw
its brightest splendour round a leafy
wood;
But not a hint from under-ground, no sign
Fit for the glimmering brow of Proser-
pine.

Or was it Dian's self that seemed to move
Before me?—nothing blemished the fair
sight;
On her I looked whom jocund Fairies
love,

Cynthia, who puts the little stars to flight,
And by that thinning magnifies the great,
For exaltation of her sovereign state.

And when I learned to mark the spectral
Shape

As each new Moon obeyed the call of
Time,

If gloom fell on me, swift was my escape :
Such happy privilege hath life's gay
Prime,

To see or not to see, as best may please
A buoyant Spirit, and a heart at ease.

Now dazzling Stranger ! when thou
meet'st my glance,

Thy dark Associate ever I discern :
Emblem of thoughts too eager to advance
While I salute my joys, thoughts sad or
stern ;

Shades of past bliss, or phantoms that,
to gain

Their fit of promised lustre, wait in vain.

So changes mortal Life with fleeting
years ;

A mournful change, should Reason fail to
bring

The timely insight that can temper fears,
And from vicissitude remove its sting ;
While Faith aspires to seats in that
domain

Where joys are perfect—neither wax nor
wane.

1826.

IX

TO THE LADY FLEMING

ON SEEING THE FOUNDATION PREPARING FOR THE
ERECTION OF RYDAL CHAPEL, WESTMORLAND

I

Blest is this Isle—our native Land ;
Where battlement and moated gate
Are objects only for the hand
Of hoary Time to decorate ;
Where shady hamlet, town that breathes
Its busy smoke in social wreaths,
No rampart's stern defence require,
Nought but the heaven-directed spire,
And steeple tower (with pealing bells
Far-heard)—our only citadels.

II

O Lady ! from a noble line
Of chieftains sprung, who stoutly bore
The spear, yet gave to works divine
A bounteous help in days of yore,
(As records mouldering in the Dell
Of Nightshade haply yet may tell ;)

• Bekangs Ghyll—or the dell of Nightshade—
in which stands St. Mary's Abbey in Low
Furness.

These kindred aspirations moved
To build, within a vale beloved,
For Him upon whose high behests
All peace depends, all safety rests.

III

How fondly will the woods embrace
This daughter of thy pious care,
Lifting her front with modest grace
To mark a fair recess more fair ;
And to exalt the passing hour ;
Or soothe it with a healing power
Drawn from the Sacrifice fulfilled,
Before this rugged soil was tilled,
Or human habitation rose
To interrupt the deep repose !

IV

Well may the villagers rejoice !
Nor heat, nor cold, nor weary ways,
Will be a hindrance to the voice
That would unite in prayer and praise :
More duly shall wild wandering Youth
Receive the curb of sacred truth.
Shall tottering Age, bent earthward, hear
The Promise, with uplifted ear :
And all shall welcome the new ray
Imparted to their sabbath-day.

V

Nor deem the Poet's hope misplaced,
His fancy cheated—that can see
A shade upon the future cast,
Of time's pathetic sanctity ;
Can hear the monitory clock
Sound o'er the lake with gentle shock
At evening, when the ground beneath
Is ruffled o'er with cells of death ;
Where happy generations lie,
Here tutored for eternity.

VI

Lives there a man whose sole delights
Are trivial pomp and city noise,
Hardening a heart that loathes or slights
What every natural heart enjoys ?
Who never caught a noon-tide dream
From murmur of a running stream ;
Could strip, for aught the prospect yields
To him, their verdure from the fields ;
And take the radiance from the clouds
In which the sun his setting shrouds.

VII

A soul so pitifully forlorn,
If such do on this earth abide,
May season apathy with scorn,
May turn indifference to pride ;
And still be not unblest—compared
With him who grovels, self-debarred
From all that lies within the scope
Of holy faith and christian hope ;
Or, shipwreck'd, kindles on the coast
False fires, that others may be lost.

VIII

Alas ! that such perverted zeal
Should spread on Britain's favoured
ground !
That public order, private weal,
Should e'er have felt or feared a wound !
From champions of the desperate law,
Which from their own blind hearts they
draw ;
Who tempt their reason to deny
God, whom their passions dare defy,
And boast that they alone are free
Who reach this dire extremity !

IX

But turn we from these " bold bad " men.
The way, mild Lady ! that hath led
Down to their " dark opprobrious den,"
Is all too rough for Thee to tread.
Softly as morning vapours glide
Down Rydal-cove from Fairfield's side,
Should move the tenor of *his* song
Who means to charity no wrong ;
Whose offering gladly would accord
With this day's work, in thought and
word.

X

Heaven prosper it ! may peace, and love,
And hope, and consolation, fall,
Through its meek influence, from above,
And penetrate the hearts of all ;
All who, around the hallowed Fane,
Shall sojourn in this fair domain ;
Grateful to Thee, while service pure,
And ancient ordinance, shall endure,
For opportunity bestowed
To kneel together, and adore their God !

1823.

X

ON THE SAME OCCASION

Oh ! gather whenceso'er ye safely may
The help which slackening Piety requires ;
Nor deem that he perforce must go astray
Who treads upon the footmarks of his sires.

Our churches, invariably perhaps, stand east
and west, but *why* is by few persons *exactly*
known ; nor, that the degree of deviation from
due east often noticeable in the ancient ones
was determined, in each particular case, by
the point in the horizon, at which the sun rose
upon the day of the saint to whom the church
was dedicated. These observances of our
ancestors, and the causes of them, are the sub-
ject of the following stanzas.

WHEN in the antique age of bow and
spear
And feudal rapine clothed with iron mail,
Came ministers of peace, intent to rear
The Mother Church in yon sequestered
vale ;

Then, to her Patron Saint a previous rite
Resounded with deep swell and solemn
close.

Through unremitting vigils of the night,
Till from his couch the *fished-for* Sun
arose.

He rose, and straight—as by divine com-
mand,

They, who^{iv} had waited for that sign to
trace

Their work's foundation, gave^v with care-
ful hand

To the high altar its determined place ;

Mindful of *him* who in the Orient born
There lived^h and on the cross his life
resigned,

And who, from out the regions of the
eternal

Issuing in pomp, shall come to judge man-
kind.

So taught *their* creed ;—nor failed *his*
eastern sky,

To add these more awful feelings, to infuse
The sweet and natural hopes that shall
not die,

Long as the sun his gladsome course
renews.

For us hath such prelude vigils ceased ;
Yet still we plant, like men of elder days
Our christian altar faithful to the east,
Whence the tall window drinks the morn-
ing rays ;

That obvious emblem giving to the eye
Of meek devotion, which erewhile it gave,
That symbol of the day-spring from on
high,

Triumphant o'er the darkness of the
grave.

1823.

XI

THE HORN OF EGREMONT CASTLE

ERE the Brothers through the gateway
Issued forth with old and young,
To the Horn Sir Eustace pointed
Which for ages there had hung.
Horn it was which none could sound,
No one upon living ground,
Save He who came as rightful Heir
To Egremont's Domains and Castle fair.

Heirs from times of earliest record
Had the House of Luch born,
Who of right had held the Lordship
Claimed by proof upon the Horn :
Each at the appointed hour
Tried the Horn,—it owned his power ;
He was acknowledged : and the blast,
Which good Sir Eustace sounded, was
the last.

With his lance Sir Eustace pointed,
And to Hubert thus said he,
"What I speak this Horn shall witness
For thy better memory.
Hear, then, and neglect me not!
At this time, and on this spot,
The words are uttered from my heart,
As my last earnest prayer ere we depart

On good service we are going
Life to risk by sea and land,
In which course if Christ our Saviour
Do joy sinful soul demand,
Hither come thou back straightway,
Hubert, if alive that day,
Return, and sound the Horn! that we
May have a living house still left in thee!"

"Fear not," quickly answered Hubert;
"As I am thy Father's son,
What thou askest, noble Brother,
Thy God's favour shall be done."
So were both right well content
Forth they from the Castle went,
And at the head of their Array
To Pales the two Brothers took their way.

Side by side they fought (the Lucies
Were a lure for valour tamed,
And where'er their strokes alighted,
There the Saracens were tamed.
Whence, then, could it come — the
thought —
By what evil spirit brought?
Oh! can a brave Man wish to take
His Brother's life, for Lands' and Castle's
sake?

"Sir!" the Ruffians said to Hubert,
"Deep he lies in Jordan flood."
Stricken by this ill assurance,
Pale and trembling Hubert stood.
"Take your earnings!" — Oh! that I
Could have seen my Brother die!
It was a pang that vexed him then;
And off returned, again, and yet again.

Months passed on, and no Sir Eustace!
Nor of him were tidings heard.
Wherefore, bold as day, the Murderer
Back again to England steered.
To his Castle Hubert sped;
Nothing has he now to dread.
But silent and by stealth he came,
And at an hour which nobody could name.

None could tell if it were night-time,
Night or day, at even or morn;
No one's eye had seen him enter,
No one's ear had heard the Horn.
But bold Hubert lives in glee:
Months and years went smilingly;
With plenty was his table spread;
And bright the Lady is who shares his
bed.

Likewise he had sons and daughters;
And, as good men do, he sate
At his board by these surrounded,
Flourishing in fair estate.
And while thus in open day
Once he sate, as old books say,
A blast was uttered from the Horn,
Where by the Castle-gate it hung forlorn.

'Tis the breath of good Sir Eustace!
He is come to claim his right:
Ancient castle, woods, and mountains
Hear the challenge with delight.
Hubert! though the blast be blown
He is helpless and alone:
Thou hast a dungeon, speak the word!
And there he may be lodged, and thou be
Lord.

Speak! — astounded Hubert cannot;
And, if power to speak he had,
All are daunted, all the household
Smitten to the heart, and sad.
'Tis Sir Eustace; if it be
Living man, it must be he!
Thus Hubert thought in his dismay,
And by a postern-gate he slunk away.

Long, and long was he unheard of:
To his Brother then he came,
Made confession, asked forgiveness,
Asked it by a brother's name,
And by all the saints in heaven;
And of Eustace was forgiven:
Then in a convent went to hide
His melancholy head, and there he died.

But Sir Eustace, whom good angels
Had preserved from murderers' hands,
And from Pagan chains had rescued,
Lived with honour on his lands.
Sons he had, saw sons of theirs;
And through ages, heirs of heirs,
A long posterity renowned,
Sounded the Horn which they alone could
sound.

1806.

XII

GOODY BLAKE AND HARRY GILL

A TRUE STORY

Oh! what's the matter? what's the
matter?

What is 't that ails young Harry Gill?
That evermore his teeth they chatter,
Chatter, chatter, chatter still!
Of waistcoats Harry has no lack,
Good duffle grey, and flannel fine;
He has a blanket on his back,
And coats enough to smother nine.

In March, December, and in July,
'Tis all the same with Harry Gill;
The neighbours tell, and tell you truly,
His teeth they chatter, chatter still.

At night, at morning, and at noon,
'Tis all the same with Harry Gill;
Beneath the sun, beneath the moon,
His teeth they chatter, chatter still!

Young Harry was a lusty drower,
And who so stout of limb as he?
His cheeks were red as ruddy clover;
His voice was like the voice of three.
Old Goody Blake was old and poor;
Ill fed she was, and thinly clad;
And any man who passed her door
Might see how poor a hut she had.
All day she spun in her poor dwelling;
And then her three hours' work at night,
Alas! 'twas hardly worth the telling,
It would not pay for candle-light.
Remote from sheltered village-green,
On a hill's northern side she dwelt,
Where from sea-blasts the hawthorn lean,
And hoary dews are slow to melt.

By the same fire to boil their pottage,
Two poor old Dames, as I have known,
Will often live in one small cottage;
But she, poor Woman! housed alone.
'Twas well enough when summer came,
The long, warm, lightsome summer-day,
Then at her door the *canty* Dame
Would sit, as any innet, gay.

But when the ice our streams did fetter,
Oh then how her old bones would shake!
You would have said, if you had met her,
'Twas a hard time for Goody Blake.
Her evenings then were dull and dead
Sad case it was, as you may think,
For very cold to go to bed;
And then for cold not sleep a wink.

O joy for her! when'er in winter
The woods at night had made a rout,
And scattered many a lusty splinter
And many a rotten bough about.
Yet never had she, well or sick,
As every man who knew her says,
A pile beforehand, turf or stick,
Enough to warm her for three days.

Now, when the frost was past enduring,
And made her poor old bones to ache,
Could anything be more alluring
Than an old hedge to Goody Blake?
And, now and then, it must be said,
When her old bones were cold and chill,
She left her fire, or left her bed,
To seek the hedge of Harry Gill.

Now Harry he had long suspected
This trespass of old Goody Blake;
And vowed that she should be detected—
That he on her would vengeance take.
And off from his warm fire he'd go,
And to the fields his road would take;
And there, at night, in frost and snow,
He watched to seize old Goody Blake.

And once, behind a rick of barley,
Thus looking out did Harry stand:
The moon was full and shining clearly,
And crisp with frost the stubble land.
—He hears a noise—he's all awake—
Again?—on tip-toe down the hill
He softly creeps—'tis Goody Blake;
She's at the hedge of Harry Gill!

Right glad was he when he beheld her:
Sick after sick did Goody fall;
He stood behind a bush of elder,
Till she had filled her apron full.
When with her head she turned about,
The by-way back again to take;
He started forward, with a shout,
And sprang upon poor Goody Blake.

And fiercely by the arm he took her,
And by the arm he held her fast,
And fiercely by the arm he shook her,
And cried, "I've caught you then, at last!"

Then Goody, who had nothing said,
Her bundle from her lap let fall;
And, kneeling on the stick, she prayed
To God that is the judge of all.

She prayed, her withered hand uprearing,
While Harry held her by the arm—
"God! who art never out of hearing,
O may he never more be warm!"
The cold, cold moon above her head,
Thus on her knees did Goody pray;
Young Harry heard what she had said:
And icy cold he turned away.

He went complaining all the morrow
That he was cold and very chill:
His face was gloom, his heart was sorrow,
Alas! that day for Harry Gill!
That day he wore a riding coat,
But not a whit the warmer he:
Another was on Thursday brought,
And ere the Sabbath he had three.

'Twas all in vain, a useless matter,
And blankets were about him pinned;
Yet still his jaws and teeth they clatter,
Like a loose casement in the wind.
And Harry's flesh it fell away;
And all who see him say, 'tis plain,
That, live as long as live he may,
He never will be warm again.

No word to any man he utters,
A-bed or up, to young or old;
But ever to himself he mutters,
"Poor Harry Gill is very cold."
A-bed or up, by night, or day;
His teeth they chatter, chatter still.
Now think, ye farmers all, I pray,
Of Goody Blake and Harry Gill!

XIII
PRELUDE

PREFIXED TO THE VOLUME ENTITLED "POEMS
CHIEFLY OF EARLY AND LATE YEARS"

In desultory walk through orchard
grounds,
Or some deep chestnut grove, oft have I
paused
The while a Thrush, urged rather than
restrained
By gusts of vernal storm, attuned his
song
To his own genial instincts: and was
heard
(Though not without some plaintive tones
between)
To utter, above showers of blossom swept
From tossing boughs, the promise of a
calm,
Which the unsheltered traveller might
receive
With thankful spirit. The descant, and
the wind
That seemed to play with it in love or
scorn,
Encouraged and endeared the strain of
words
That haply flowed from me by fits of
silence
Impelled to livelier pace. But now, my
Book!
Charged with those lays, and others of
like mood,
Or loftier pitch if higher rose the theme,
Go, single—yet aspiring to be joined
With thy Forerunners that through many
a year
Have faithfully prepared each other's
way—
Go forth upon a mission best fulfilled
When and wherever, in this changeable
world,
Power hath been given to please for
higher ends
Than pleasure only; gladdening to pre-
pare
For wholesome sadness, troubling to re-
fine,
Calming to raise; and, by a sapient Art
Diffused through all the mysteries of our
Being,
Softening the toils and pains that have
not ceased
To cast their shadows on our mother
Earth
Since the primeval doom. Such is the
grace
Which, though unsued for, fails not to
descend
With heavenly inspiration; such the aim
That Reason dictates; and, as even the
wish

Has virtue in it, why should hope to me
Be wanting that sometimes, where fan-
cied ills
Harass the mind and strip from off the
bowers
Of private life their natural pleasantness,
A Voice—devoted to the love whose
seed
Are sown in every human breast, to
beauty
Lodged within compass of the humblest
sight,
To cheerful intercourse with wood and
field,
And sympathy with man's substantial
griefs—
Will not be heard in vain? And in those
days
When unforeseen distress spreads far and
wide
Among a People mournfully cast down,
Or into anger roused by venal words
In recklessness flung out to overturn
The judgment, and divert the general
heart
From amiable good—some strain of thine,
my Book!
Caught at propitious intervals, may win
Listeners who not unwillingly admit
Kindly emotion tending to console
And reconcile; and both with young and
old
Exalt the sense of thoughtful gratitude
For benefits that still survive, by faith
In progress, under laws divine, main-
tained.

RYDAL MOUNT,
March 26, 1842.

XIV
TO A CHILD

WRITTEN IN HER ALBUM

Small service is true service while it
lasts:
Of humblest Friends, bright Creature!
scorn not one:
The Daisy, by the shadow that it casts,
Protects the lingering dewdrop from the
Sun.

XV

LINES

WRITTEN IN THE ALBUM OF THE COUNTESS OF
LONSDALE, NOV. 5, 1834.

LADY! a Pen (perhaps with thy regard,
Among the Favoured, favoured not the
least)
Left, 'mid the Records of this Book in-
scribed,
Deliberate traces, registers of thought
And feeling, suited to the place and time

1834.

That gave them birth :—months passed,
 and still this hand,
 That had not been too timid to impart
 Words which the virtues of thy Lord in-
 spired,
 Was yet not bold enough to write of Thee.
 And why that scrupulous reserve? In
 sooth
 The blameless cause lay in thy Theme
 itself.
 Flowers are there many that delight to
 strive
 With the sharp wind, and seem to court
 the shower,
 Yet are by nature careless of the sun
 Whether he shine on them or not; and
 some,
 Where'er he moves along the unclouded
 sky,
 Turn a broad front full on his flattering
 beams :
 Others do rather from their notice shrink,
 Loving the dewy shade,—a humble band,
 Modest and sweet, a progeny of earth,
 Congenial with thy mind and character,
 High-born Augusta !

Witness Towers, and Groves !
 And Thou, wild Stream, that giv'st the
 honoured name
 Of Lowther to this ancient Line, bear
 From thy most secret haunts ; and ye
 Parterres,
 Which She is pleased and proud to call
 her own,
 Witness how oft upon my noble Friend
Mute offerings, tribute from an inward
 sense
 Of admiration and respectful love,
 Have waited—till the affections could no
 more
 Endure that silence, and broke out in
 song,
 Snatches of music taken up and dropt.
 Like those self-solacing, those under
 notes
 Trilled by the redbreast, when autumnal
 leaves
 Are thin upon the bough. Mine, only
 mine,
 The pleasure war, and no one heard the
 praise,
 Checked, in the moment of its issue,
 checked
 And apprehended, by a fancied blush
 From the pure qualities that called it
 forth.

Thus Virtue lives debarred from Vir-
 tue's meed ;
 Thus, Lady, is retiredness a veil
 That, while it only spreads a softening
 charm

O'er features looked at by discerning
 eyes,
 Hides half their beauty from the common
 gaze ;
 And thus, even on the exposed and breezy
 hill
 Of lofty station, for a good woman walks,
 When side by side with lunar gentleness,
 As in a cloister. Yet the grateful Poor
 (Such the immunities of low estate,
 Plain Nature's enviable privilege,
 Her sacred recompence for many wants)
 Open their hearts before Thee, pouring
 out
 All that they think and feel, with tears of
 joy ;
 And benedictions not unheard in heaven :
 And triumph in the ear of friend, where,
 speech is free
 To follow truth, is eloquent as they.

Then let the Book receive in these
 prompt lines
 A just memorial ; and thine eyes consent
 To read that they, who mark thy course,
 behold
 A life declining with the golden light
 Of summer, in the season of sere leaves ;
 See cheerfulness undamped by stealing
 Time ;
 See studied kindness flow with easy
 stream,
 Illustrated with inborn courtesy ;
 And an habitual disregard of self
 Balanced by vigilance for others' weal.
 And shall the Verse not tell of lighter
 gifts
 With these ennobling attributes con-
 joined
 And blended, in peculiar harmony,
 By Youth's surviving spirit ? What
 agile grace !
 A nymph-like liberty, in nymph-like
 form,
 Beheld with wonder ; whether floor or
 path
 Thou tread ; or sweep—borne on the
 managed steed—
 Fleet as the shadows, over down or field,
 Driven by strong winds at play among
 the clouds.

Yet one word more—one farewell word
 —a wish
 Which came, but it has passed into a
 prayer—
 That, as thy sun in brightness is declin-
 ing,
 So—at an hour yet distant for *their*
 sakes
 Whose tender love, here faltering on the
 way

Of a diviner love, will be forgiven—
So may it set in peace, to rise again
For everlasting glory won by faith.

XVI GRACE DARLING

Among the dwellers in the silent fields
The natural heart is touched, and public
way
And crowded street resounds with ballad
strains,
Inspired by one whose very name be-
speaks
Favour divine, exalting human love :
Whom, since her birth on bleak Northum-
bria's coast,
Known unto few but prized as far as
known,
A single Act endears to high and low
Through the whole land to Manhood,
moved in spite
Of the world's freezing cares—to gener-
ous Youth—
To Infancy, that lisps her praise to
Age
Whose eye reflects it, glistening through
a tear
Of tremulous admiration. Such true
fame
Awaits her now : but, verily, good deeds
Do no imperishable record find
Save in the rolls of heaven, where hers
may live
A theme for angels, when they celebrate
The high-souled virtues which forgetful
earth
Has witness'd. Oh ! that winds and
waves could speak
Of things which their united power called
forth
From the pure depths of her humanity !
A Maiden gentle, yet, at duty's call,
Firm and unflinching, as the Lighthouse
reared
On the Island-rock, her lonely dwelling-
place ;
Or like the invincible Rock itself that
braves,
Age after age, the hostile elements,
As when it guarded holy Cuthbert's cell.

All night the storm had raged, nor
ceased, nor paused,
When, as day broke, the Maid, through
misty air,
Espies far off a Wreck, amid the surf,
Beating on one of those disastrous isles—
Half of a Vessel, half—no more ; the rest
Had vanished, swallowed up with all
that there
Had for the common safety striven in
vain,

Or thither thronged for refuge. With
quick glance
Daughter and Sire through optic-glass
discern,
Clinging about the remnant of this Ship,
Creature—how precious in the Maiden's
sight !
For who, belike, the old Man grieves
still more
Than for their fellow-sufferers engulfed
Where every parting agony is hushed,
And hope and fear mix not in further
strife.
“ But courage, Father ! let us out to
sea—
A few may yet be saved.” The Daugh-
ter's words,
Her earnest tone, and look beaming with
faith,
Dispel the Father's doubts : nor do they
lack
The noble-minded Mother's helping hand
To launch the boat, and with her bless-
ing cheered,
And inwardly sustained by silent prayer,
Together they put forth, Father and
Child !
Each grasps an oar, and struggling on
they go—
Rivals in effort : and, alike intent
Here to elude and there surmount, they
watch
The billows lengthening, mutually
crossed
And shattered, and re-gathering their
might :
As if the tumult, by the Almighty's will,
Were, in the conscious sea, roused and
prolonged
That woman's fortitude—so tried, so
proved—
May brighten more and more !

True to the mark,
They stem the current of that perilous
gorge,
Their arms still strengthening with the
strengthening heart,
Though danger, as the Wreck is near'd,
becomes
More imminent. Not unseen do they
approach :
And rapture, with varieties of fear
incessantly conflicting, thrills the frames
Of those who, in that dauntless energy,
Foretaste deliverance ; but the least per-
turbed
Can scarcely trust his eyes, when he per-
ceives
That of the pair—tossed on the waves to
bring
Hope to the hopeless, to the dying, life—
One is a Woman, a poor earthly sister,

O, be the Visitant other than she seems,
 A guardian Spirit sent from pitying
 Heaven,
 In woman's shape. But why prolong the
 tale,
 Casting weak words amid a host of
 thoughts
 Armed to repel them? Every hazard
 faced
 And difficulty mastered, with resolve
 That no one breathing should be left to
 perish,
 This last remainder of the crew are all
 Placed in the little boat, then o'er the
 deep
 Are safely borne, landed upon the beach.
 And, in fulfilment of God's mercy, lodged
 Within the sheltering Lighthouse.—
 Shout, ye waves!
 Send forth a song of triumph. Waves
 and Winds,
 Exult in this deliverance wrought
 through faith
 In Him whose Providence your rage hath
 served!
 Ye screaming Sea-mews, in the concert
 join!
 And would that some immortal Voice—
 a Voice
 Fittingly attuned to all that gratitude
 Breathes out from floor or couch, through
 pallid lips
 Of the survivors—to the clouds might
 bear—
 Blended with praise of that parental love,
 Beneath whose watchful eye the Maiden
 grew
 Pious and pure, modest and yet so brave,
 Though young so wise, though meek so
 resolute—
 Might carry to the clouds and to the stars,
 Yes, to celestial Choirs, GRACE DARLING'S
 name!

1842.

XVII

THE RUSSIAN FUGITIVE

PART I

ENOUGH of rose-bud lips, and eyes
 Like harebells bathed in dew,
 Of cheek that with carnation vies,
 And veins of violet hue;
 Earth wants not beauty that may scorn
 A likening to frail flowers;
 Yea, to the stars, if they were born
 For seasons and for hours.
 Through Moscow's gates, with gold un-
 barred,
 Stepped One at dead of night,
 Whom such high beauty could not guard
 From meditated blight;

By stealth she passed, and fled as fast
 As doth the hunted fawn,
 Nor stopped, till in the dappling east
 Appeared unwelcome dawn.

Seven days she lurked in brake and field,
 Seven nights her course renewed,
 Sustained by what her scrip might yield,
 Or berries of the wood;
 At length, in darkness travelling on,
 When lowly doors were shut,
 The haven of her hope she won,
 Her Foster mother's hut.

"To put your love to dangerous proof,
 I come," said she, "from far;
 For I have left my Father's roof,
 In terror of the Czar."
 No answer did the Matron give,
 No second look she cast,
 But hung upon the Fugitive,
 Embracing and embraced.

She led the Lady to a seat
 Beside the glimmering fire,
 Lathed duteously her wayworn feet,
 Prevented each desire:—
 The cricket chirped, the "house-dog
 dozed,

And on that simple bed,
 Where she in childhood had reposed,
 Now rests her weary head.

When she, whose couch had been the sod,
 Whose curtain, pine or thorn,
 Had breathed a sigh of thanks to God,
 Who comforts the forlorn;
 While over her the Matron bent
 Sleep sealed her eyes, and stole
 Feeling from limbs with travel spent,
 And trouble from the soul.

Refreshed, the Wanderer rose at morn,
 And soon again was dight
 In those unworthy vestments worn
 Through long and perilous flight;
 And "O beloved Nurse," she said,
 "My thanks with silent tears
 Have unto Heaven and You been paid:
 Now listen to my fears!

"Have you forgot"—and here she
 smiled—

"The babbling flatteries
 You lavished on me when a child
 Disporting round your knees?
 I was your lambkin, and your bird,
 Your star, your gem, your flower;
 Light words, that were more lightly
 heard

In many a cloudless hour!

"The blossom you so fondly praised
 Is come to bitter fruit;
 A mighty One upon me gazed;
 I spurned his lawless suit,

And must be hidden from his wrath :
You, Foster-father dear,
Will guide me in my forward path ;
I may not tarry here !

" I cannot bring to utter woe
Your proved fidelity."—
" Dear Child, sweet Mistress, say not so !
For you we both would die."
" Nay, nay, I come with semblance
feigned
And cheek embrowned by art ;
Yet, being inwardly unstained,
With courage will depart."
" But whither would you, could you, flee ?
A poor Man's counsel take ;
The Holy Virgin gives to me
A thought for your dear sake :
Rest, shielded by our Lady's grace,
And soon shall you be led
Forth to a safe abiding-place,
Where never foot doth tread."

PART II

THE dwelling of this faithful pair
In a straggling village stood,
For One who breathed unquiet air
A dangerous neighbourhood ;
But wide around lay forest ground
With thickets rough and blind ;
And pine trees made a heavy shade
Impervious to the wind.
And there, sequestered from the sight,
Was spread a treacherous swamp,
On which the noonday sun shed light
As from a lonely lump ;
And midway in the unsafe morass,
A single Island rose
Of firm dry ground, with healthful grass
Adorned, and shady boughs.

The Woodman knew, for such the craft
This Russian vassal plied,
That never fowler's gun, nor shaft
Of archer, there was tried ;
A sanctuary seemed the spot
From all intrusion free ;
And there he planned an artful Cot
For perfect secrecy.

With earnest pains unchecked by dread
Of Power's far-stretching hand,
The bold good Man his labour sped
At nature's pure command ;
Heart soothed, and busy as a wren,
While, in a hollow nook,
She moulds her sight-eluding den
Above a murmuring brook.

His task accomplished to his mind,
The twain ere break of day
Creep forth, and through the forest wind
Their solitary way ;

Few words they speak, nor dare to slack
Their pace from mile to mile,
Til they have crossed the quaking marsh,
And reached the lonely Isle.

The sun above the pine-trees showed
A bright and cheerful face ;
And Ina looked for her abode,
The promised hiding-place ;
She sought in vain, the Woodman smiled ;
No threshold could be seen,
Nor roof nor window :—all seemed wild
As it had ever been.

Advancing, you might guess an hour,
The front with such nice care
Is masked, " if house it be or bower,"
But in they entered are :
As shaggy as were wall and roof
With branches intertwined,
So smooth was all within, air-proof,
And delicately lined :

And hearth was there, and maple dish,
And cups in seemly rows,
And couch—all ready to a wish
For nurture or repose :
And Heaven doth to her virtue grant
That here she may abide
In solitude, with every want
By cautious love supplied.

No queen, before a shouting crowd,
Led on in bridal state,
E'er struggled with a heart so proud,
Entering her palace gate ;
Rejoiced to bid the world farewell,
No saintly anchoress
E'er took possession of her cell
With deeper thankfulness.

" Father of all, upon thy care
And mercy am I thrown :
Be thou my safeguard!"—such her
prayer
When she was left alone,
Kneeling amid the wilderness
When joy had passed away,
And smiles, fond efforts of distress
To hide what they betray !

The prayer is heard, the Saints have seen,
Diffused through form and face,
Resolves devoted, serene :
That monumental grace
Of Faith, which doth all passions tame
That Reason should control ;
And shows in the untrembling frame
A statue of the soul.

PART III

'Tis sung in ancient minstrelsy
That Phœbus wont to wear
The leaves of any pleasant tree
Around his golden hair ;

Till Daphne, desperate with pursuit
Of his impetuous love,
At her own prayer transformed, took
root,

A laurel in the grove.

Then did the Penitent adorn
His brow with laurel green;
And 'mid his bright locks never shorn
No meaner leaf was seen:
And poets sage, through every age,
About their temples wound
The bay; and conquerors thanked the
Gods,

With laurel chaplets crowned.
Into the mists of fabled Time
So far runs back the praise
Of Beauty, that dildams to climb
Along forbidden ways;
That scorns temptation; power defies
Where mutual love is not:
And to the tomb for rescue flies
When life would be a blot.

To this fair Votress, a fate
More mild doth Heaven ordain
Upon her Island desolate:
And words, not breathed in vain,
Might tell what intercourse she found,
Her silence to endear;
What birds she tamed, what flowers the
ground

Sent forth her peace to cheer.

To one mute Presence, above all,
Her soothed affections clung,
A picture on the cabin wall
By Russian usage hung—
The Mother-maid, whose countenance
bright

With love abridged the day:
And, communed with by taper light,
Chased spectral fears away.

And oft, as either Guardian came,
The joy in that retreat
Might any common friendship share,
So high their hearts would beat:
And to the lone Recluse, whate'er
They brought, each visiting
Was like the crowding of the year
With a new burst of spring.

But, when she of her Parents thought,
The pang was hard to bear:
And, if with all things not enwrought,
That trouble still is near.
Before her flight she had not dared
Their constancy to prove.
Too much the heroic Daughter feared
The weakness of their love.

Dark is the past to them, and dark
The future still must be,
Till pitying Saints conduct her bark
Into a safer sea—

Or gentle Nature close her eyes,
And set her Spirit free
From the altar of this sacrifice,
In vestal purity.

Yet, when above the forest-gloom
The white swans southward passed,
High as the pitch of their swift plumes
Her fancy rode the blast;
And bore her toward the fields of France
Her Father's native land
To mingle in the rustic dance,
The happiest of the band!

Of those beloved fields she oft
Had heard her Father tell
In phrase that now with echoes soft
Haunted her lonely cell:
She saw the hereditary bowers,
She heard the ancestral stream:
The Kremlin and its haughty towers
Forgotten like a dream!

PART IV

The ever-changing Moon had traced
Twelve times her monthly round,
When through the unfrequented Waste
Was heard a startling sound:
A shout thrice sent from one who chased
At speed a wounded deer.
Bounding through branches interlaced,
And where the wood was clear.

The fainting creature took the marsh,
And toward the Island fled,
While plovers screamed with tumult
harsh
Above his antlered head;
This, Ina saw; and, pale with fear,
Shrunk to her citadel:
The desperate deer rushed on, and near
The tangled covert fell.

Across the marsh, the game in view,
The Hunter followed fast,
Nor paused, till o'er the stag he blew
A death-proclaiming blast;
Then, resting on her upright mind,
Came forth the Maid—"In me
Behold," she said, "a stricken Hind
Pursued by destiny!

"From your deportment, Sir! I deem
That you have worn a sword,
And will not hold in light esteem
A suffering woman's word;
There is my covert, there perchance
I might have lain concealed,
My fortunes hid, my countenance
Not even to you revealed.

"Tears might be shed; and I might pray;
Crouching and terrified,
That what has been unveiled to lay,
You would in mystery hide;

But I will not defile with dust
The knee that bends to adore
The God in heaven ;—attend, he just ;
This ask I, and no more !

" I speak not of the winter's cold,
For summer's heat exchanged,
While I have lodged in this rough hold,
From social life estranged ;
Nor yet of trouble and alarms :
High Heaven is my defence ;
And every season has soft arms
For injured Innocence.

" From Moscow to the Wilderness
It was my choice to come,
Lest virtue should be harbourless,
And honour want a home ;
And happy were I, if the Czar
Retain his lawless will,
To end life here like this poor deer,
Or a lamb on a green hill."

" Art you the Maid," the Stranger cried,
" From Gallic parents sprung,
Whose vanishing was rumoured wide,
Sad theme for every tongue ;
Who foiled an Emperor's eager quest ?
You, Lady, forced to wear
These rude habiliments, and rest
Your head in this dark lair !"

But wonder, pity, soon were quelled,
And in her face and mien
The soul's pure brightness he beheld
Without a veil between :
He loved, he hoped,—a holy flame
Kindled mid rapturous tears,
The passion of a moment came
As on the wings of years.

" Such bounty is no gift of chance,"
Exclaimed he : " righteous Heaven,
Preparing your deliverance,
To me the charge hath given.
The Czar full oft in words and deeds
Is stormy and self-willed ;
But, when the Lady Catherine pleads,
His violence is stilled.

" Leave open to my wish the course,
Aid I to her will go ;
From that humane and heavenly source,
Good, only good, can flow."
Faint sanction given, the Cavalier
Was eager to depart,
Though question followed question, dear
To the Maiden's filial heart.

Eight was his step,—his hopes, more light,
Kept pace with his desires ;
And the fifth morning gave him sight
Of Moscow's glittering spires.
He sued :—heart-smitten by the wrong,
To the torn fugitive
The Emperor sent a pledge as strong
As sovereign power could give.

" O more than mighty change ! If e'er
Amazement rose to pain,
And joy's excess produced a fear
Of something void and vain ;
'Twas when the Parents, who had
mourned
So long the lost as dead,
Beheld their only Child returned,
The household floor to tread.

Soon gratitude gave way to love
Within the Maiden's breast :
Delivered and Deliverer move
In bridal garments drest ;
Meek Catherine had her own reward ;
The Czar bestowed a dower ;
And universal Moscow shared
The triumph of that hour.

Flowers strewed the ground : the nuptial
feast
Was held with costly state ;
And there, mid many a noble guest,
The Foster parents sat ;
Encouraged by the imperial eye,
They shrank not into shade ;
Great was their bliss, the honour high
To them and nature paid !

1830.

INSCRIPTIONS

I
IN THE GROUNDS OF COLEORTON. THE
SEAT OF SIR, GEORGE BEAUMONT,
BART., BEICESTERSHIRE
1808

THE embowering rose, the acacia, and the
pine,
Will not unwillingly their place resign ;
If but the Cedar thrive that near them
stands,

Planted by Beaumont's and by Words-
worth's hands.
One wooed the silent Art with studious
pains :
These groves have heard the Other's
pensive strains ;
Devoted thus, their spirits did unite
By interchange of knowledge and delight.
May Nature's kindest powers sustain
the Tree,
And Love protect it from all injury !

And when its potent branches, wide out-
thrown,
Darken the brow of this memorial Stone,
Here may some Painter sit in future days,
Some future Poet meditate his lays;
Not mindless of that distant age re-
nowned
When Inspiration hovered o'er this
ground,
The haunt of him who sang how speer
and shield
In civil conflict met on Bosworth-field;
And of that famous Youth, full soon re-
moved
From earth, perhaps by Shakspeare's self
approved,
Fletcher's Associate, Jonson's Friend
beloved.

II

IN A GARDEN OF THE SAME
OFT is the medal faithful to its trust
When temples, columns, towers, are laid
in dust;
And 'tis a common ordinance of fate
That things obscure and small outlive the
great:
Hence, when yon mansion and the
flowery trim
Of this fair garden, and its alleys dim,
And all its stately trees, are passed away,
This little Niche, unconscious of decay,
Perchance may still survive. And be it
known
That it was scooped within the living
stone,—
Not by the sluggish and ungrateful pains
Of labourer plodding for his daily gains,
But by an industry that wrought in love;
With help from female hands, that
proudly strove
To aid the work, what time these walks
and bowers
Were shaped to cheer dark winter's
lonely hours.

III

WRITTEN AT THE REQUEST OF SIR GEORGE
BEAUMONT, BART., AND IN HIS NAME,
FOR AN URN, PLACED BY HIM AT THE
TERMINATION OF A NEWLY-PLANTED
AVENUE, &c. IN THE SAME GROUNDS
YE Lime-trees, ranged before this hal-
lowed Urn,
Shoot forth with lively power at Spring's
return;
And be not slow a stately growth to rear
Of pillars, branching off from year to year,
Till they have learned to frame a dark-
some aisle;—
That may recal to mind that awful Pile
Where Reynolds, 'mid our country's
noblest dead,

In the fast sanctity of fame is laid.
—There, though by right the excelling
Painter sleep
Where Death and Glory a joint sabbath
keep,
Yet not the less his Spirit would hold dear
Self-hidden praise, and Friendship's
private tear
Hence, on my paternal grounds, have I
Raised this frail tribute to his memory;
From youth a zealous follower of the Art
That he professed; attached to him in
heart:
Admiring, loving, and with grief and pride
Feeling what England lost when Re-
nolds died.

IV

FOR A SEAT IN THE GROVES OF COLEORTON
BENEATH yon eastern ridge, the craggy
bound,
Rugged and high, of Charnwood's forest
ground
Stand yet, but, Stranger! hidden from
thy view,
The ivied Ruins of forlorn GRACE DIEU;
Ere a religious House, which Day and
night
With hymns resounded, and the chanted
rite:
And when those rites had ceased, the
Spot gave birth
To honourable Men of various worth:
There, on the margin of a streamlet wild,
Did Francis Beaumont sport, an eager
child;
There, under shadow of the neighbouring
rocks,
Sang youthful tales of shepherds and
their flocks:
Unconscious prelude to heroic themes,
Heart-breaking tears, and melancholy
dreams
Of slighted love, and scorn, and jealous
rage,
With which his genius shook the buskined
stage.
Communities are lost, and Empires die,
And things of holy use unhallowed lie;
They perish:—but the Intellect can raise,
From airy words alone, a Pile that ne'er
decays.

1808.

V

WRITTEN WITH A PENCIL UPON A STONE
IN THE WALL OF THE HOUSE (AN OUT-
HOUSE), ON THE ISLAND AT GRAS-
MERE
RUDE is this Edifice, and Thou hast seen
Buildings, albeit rude, that have main-
tained

Proportions more harmonious, and approached
To closer fellowship with ideal grace.
But take it in good part :—alas ! the poor
Vitruvius of our village had no help
From the great City ; never, upon leaves
Of red Morocco folio saw displayed,
In long succession, preëxisting ghosts
Of Beauties yet unborn—the rustic Lodge
Antique, and Cottage with verandah
graced,
Nor lacking, for fit company, alcove,
Dress-house, shell-grot, and moss-lined
hermitage.
Thou see'st a homely Pile, yet to these
walls
The winter comes in the snow-storm, and
here
The dew-dropped lamb finds shelter from
the wind.
And hither does one Poet sometimes row
His pinnace, a small vagrant barge, up-
piled
With plentiful store of heath and
withered fern.
(A ladling which he with his sickle cuts,
Among the mountains) and beneath this
roof
He makes his summer couch, and here at
noon
Spreads out his limbs, while, yet unshorn,
the Sheep,
Panting beneath the burthen of their
wool,
Lie round him, even as if they were a part
Of his own Household : nor, while from
his bed
He looks, through the open door-place,
toward the lake
And to the stirring breeze, does he want
Creations lovely as the work of sleep—
Fair sights, and visions of romantic joy !

VI

WRITTEN WITH A SLATE PENCIL ON A
STONE, ON THE SIDE OF THE MOUNTAIN
OF BLACK COMB
STAY, bold Adventurer ; rest awhile thy
limbs
On this commodious Seat ! for much re-
mains
Of hard ascent before thou reach the top
Of this huge Eminence,—from blackness
named,
And, to far-travelled storms of sea and
land,
A favourite spot of tournament and war !
But thee may no such boisterous visitants
Molest ; may gentle breezes fan thy brow ;
And neither cloud conceal, nor misty air
Bedim, the grand terraqueous spectacle,
From centre to circumference, unveiled !

W. P.

Know, if thou grudge not to prolong thy
rest,
That on the summit whither thou art
bound.
A geographic Labourer pitched his tent,
With books supplied and instruments of
art,
To measure height and distance ; lonely
task
Week after week pursued !—To him was
given
Full many a glimpse (but sparingly be-
stowed
On timid man) of Nature's processes
Upon the exalted hills. He made report
That once, while there he plied his studi-
ous work
Within that canvas Dwelling, colours,
hues,
And the whole surface of the out-spread
map,
Became invisible : for all around
Had darkness fallen—unthreatened, un-
proclaimed—
As if the golden day itself had been
Extinguished in a moment ; total gloom.
In which he sat alone, with unclosed
eyes,
Upon the blinded mountain's silent top :
1813.

VII

WRITTEN WITH A SLATE PENCIL UPON A
STONE, THE LARGEST OF A HEAP
LYING NEAR A DESERTED QUARRY,
UPON ONE OF THE ISLANDS AT RYDAL
STRANGER ! this hillock of mis-shapen
stones
Is not a Ruin spared or made by time,
Nor, as perchance thou rashly deem'st,
the Cairn
Of some old British Chief : 'tis nothing
more
Then the rude embryo of a little Dome
Or Pleasure-house, once destined to be
built
Among the birch-trees of this rocky isle.
But, as it chanced, Sir William having
learned
That from the stones a full-grown man
might wade,
And make himself a freeman of this spot
At any hour he chose, the prudent Knight
Desisted, and the quarry and the mound
Are monuments of his unfinished task.
The block on which these lines are
traced, perhaps,
Was once selected as the corner-stone
Of that intended Pile, which would have
been
Some quaint odd plaything of elaborate
skill.

FF

So that, I guess, the linnet and the thrush,
And other little builders who dwell here,
Had wondered at the work. But blame
him not.

For old Sir William was a gentle Knight,
Bred in this vale, to which he afterwards
With all his ancestry. Then peace to
him,

And for the outrage which he had devised
Entire forgiveness!—But if thou art one
On fire with thy impatience to become
An inmate of these mountains,—if, dis-
turbed

By beautiful conceptions, thou hast
hewn

Out of the quiet rock the elements
Of thy trim Mansion destined soon to
blaze

In snow-white splendour,—think again ;
and, taught

By old Sir William and his quarry, leave
Thy fragments to the bramble and the
rose ;

There let the vernal slow-worm sun him-
self,

And let the redbreast hop from stone to
stone.

1800.

VIII

In these fair vales hath many a Tree
At Wordsworth's suit been spared ;
And from the builder's hand this Stone,
For some rude beauty of its own,

Was rescued by the Bard :
So let it rest ; and time will come

When here the tender-hearted
May heave a gentle sigh for him,
As one of the departed.

1830.

IX

THE massy Ways, carried across these
heights

By Roman perseverance, are destroyed,
Or hidden under ground, like sleeping
worms.

How venture then to hope that Time will
spare

This humble Walk ?—& et on the moun-
tain's side

A Poet's hand first shaped it ; and the
steps

Of that same Bard—repeated to and fro
At morn, at noon, and under moonlight
skies

Through the vicissitudes of many a
year—

Forbade the weeds to creep o'er its grey
line.

No longer, scattering to the heedless
winds

The vocal raptures of fresh poesy,

Shall he frequent these precincts ; locked
no more

In earnest converse with beloved Friends,
Here will he gather stores of ready bliss,
As from the beds and borders of a garden
Choice flowers are gathered ! But, if

Power may spring
Out of a farewell yearning—favoured
more

Than kindred wishes mated suitably
With vain regrets—the Exile would con-
sign

This Walk, his loved possession, to the
care

Of those pure Minds that reverence the
Muse.

1826.

X

INSCRIPTIONS SUPPOSED TO BE FOUND
IN AND NEAR A HERMIT'S CELL

1818

HOPES what are they ?—Beads of morn-
ing

Strung on slender blades of grass ;
Or a spider's web adorning

In a strait and treacherous pass.

What are tears but voices airy ?
Whispering harm where harm is not ;
And deluding the unwary
Till the fatal bolt is shot !

What is glory ?—in the socket
See how dying tapers fare !
What is pride ?—a whizzing rocket
That would emulate a star.

What is friendship ?—do not trust her,
Nor the vows which she has made ;
Diamonds dart their brightest lustre
From a palsy-shaken head.

What is truth ?—a staff rejected ;
Duty ?—an unwelcome clog ;

Joy ?—a moon by fits reflected
In a swamp or watery bog ;

Bright, as if through ether steering,
To the Traveller's eye it shone :
He hath hailed it re-appearing—
And as quickly it is gone ;

Such is Joy—as quickly hidden,
Or mis-shapen to the sight,
And by sullen weeds forbidden
To resume its native light.

What is youth ?—a dancing willow,
(Winds behind, and rocks before !)
Age ?—a drooping, tottering willow
On a flat and lazy shore.

What is peace ?—when pain is over,
And love ceases to rebel,
Let the last faint sigh discover
That precedes the passing-knell !

XI

INSCRIBED UPON A ROCK

II

PAUSE, Traveller ! whosoe'er thou be
Whom chance may lead to this retreat,
Where silence yields reluctantly
Even to the fleecy straggler's bleat ;

Give voice to what my hand shall trace,
And fear not lest an idle sound
Of words unsuited to the place
Disturb its solitude profound.

I saw this Rock, while vernal air
Blew softly o'er the russet heath,
Uphold a Monument as fair
As church or abbey furnisheth.

Unscathed did it meet the day,
Like marble, white, like ether, pure ;
As if, beneath, some hero lay,
Honoured with costliest sepulture.

My fancy kindled as I gazed ;
And, ever as the sun shone forth,
The flattered structure glistened, blazed,
And seemed the proudest thing on earth.

But frost had reared the gorgeous Pile
Unsound, whose which Fortune builds—
To undermine with secret guile,
Sapped by the very beam that gilds.

And, while I gazed, with sudden shock
Fell the whole Fabric to the ground ;
And naked left this dripping Rock,
With shapeless ruin spread around !

XII

III

HAST thou seen, with flash incessant,
Bubbles gliding under ice,
Bodied forth and evanescent,
No one knows by what device ?

Such are thoughts !—A wind-swept
meadow
Mimicking a troubled sea,
Such is life ; and death a shadow
From the rock eternity !

XIII

NEAR THE SPRING OF THE HERMITAGE

IV

TROUBLED long with warring notions
Long impatient of Thy rod,
I resign my soul's emotions
Unto Thee, mysterious God !

What avails the kindly shelter
Yielded by this craggy rent,
If my spirit toss and welter
On the waves of discontent ?

Parching Summer hath no warrant
To consume this crystal Well ;
Rains, that make each rill a torrent,
Neither sully it nor swell.

Thus, by honouring not her station,
Would my Life present to Thee,
Gracious, God, the pure oblation
Of divinely tranquillity !

XIV

V

Nor seldom, clad in radiant vest,
Deceitfully goes forth the Morn ;
Not seldom Evening in the west
Sinks smilingly forsworn.

The smoothest seas will sometimes prove,
To the confiding Bark, untrue ;
And, if she trust the stars above,
They can be treacherous too.

The umbrageous Oak, in pomp outspread,
Full oft, when storms the welkin rend,
Draws lightning down upon the head
It promised to defend.

But Thou art true, incarnate Lord,
Who didst vouchsafe for man to die ;
Thy smile is sure, Thy plighted word
No change can falsify !

I bent before Thy gracious throne,
And asked for peace on suppliant knee ;
And peace was given,—nor peace alone,
But faith sublimed to ecstasy !

XV

FOR THE SPOT WHERE THE HERMITAGE
STOOD ON ST. HERBERT'S ISLAND,
DERWENT-WATER

If thou in the dear love of some one
Friend

Hast been so happy that thou know'st
what thoughts

Will sometimes in the happiness of love
Make the heart sink, then wilt thou
reverence

This quiet spot ; and, Stranger ! not un-
moved

Wilt thou behold this shapeless heap of
stones,

The desolate ruins of St. Herbert's Cell.
Here stood his threshold ; here was spread
the roof

That sheltered him, a self-secluded Man,
After long exercise in social cares
And offices humane, intent to adore
The Deity, with undistracted mind,
And meditate on everlasting things,
In utter solitude.—But he had left
A fellow-labourer, whom the good Man
loved

As his own soul. And, when with eye
upraised

To heaven he knelt before the crucifix,
 While o'er the lake the cataract of Lodore
 Pealed to his orisons, and when he paced
 Along the beach of this small isle and
 thought
 Of his Companion, he would pray that
 both
 (Now that their earthly duties were fulfilled)
 Might die in the same moment. Nor in
 vain
 So prayed he:—as our chronicles report,
 Though here the Hermit numbered his
 last day
 Far from St. Cuthbert his beloved Friend.

Those holy Men both died in the same
 hour. 1800.

XVI

ON THE BANKS OF A ROCKY STREAM

BEHOLD an emblem of our human mind
 Crowded with thoughts that need a
 settled home,
 Yet, like to eddying balls of foam
 Within this whirlpool, they each other
 chase
 Round and round, and neither find
 An outlet nor a resting-place!
 Stranger, if such quietude be thine,
 Fall on thy knees and sue for help divine.

SELECTIONS FROM CHAUCER

MODERNISED

I

THE PRIORESS' TALE

"Call up him who left half told
 The story of Cambuscan bold."

In the following Poem no further deviation from the original has been in idea than was necessary for the fluent reading and instant understanding of the Author: so much, however, is the language altered since Chaucer's time, especially in pronunciation, that much was to be removed, and its place supplied with as little incongruity as possible. The ancient accent has been retained in a few conjunctions, as *also* and *away*, from a conviction that such sprinklings of antiquity would be admitted, by persons of taste, to have a graceful accordance with the subject. The heroic biography of the Prioreess forms a fine back-ground for her tender-hearted sympathies with the Mother and Child; and the mode in which the story is told amply atones for the extravagance of the miracle.

I

"O LORD our Lord! how wondrously,"
 (quoth she)

"Thy name in this large world is spread
 abroad!

For not alone by men of dignity
 Thy worship is performed and precious
 laud;

But by the mouths of children, gracious
 God!

Thy goodness is set forth; they when
 they lie

Upon the breast thy name do glorify.

II

Wherefore in praise, the worthiest that I
 may,

Jesu! of thee, and the white Lilv-flower
 Which did thee bear, and is a Maid for
 aye,

To tell a story I will use my power;
 Not that I may increase her honour's
 dower,

For she herself is honour, and the root
 Of goodness, next her Son, our soul's best
 best.

III

O Mother Maid! O Maia and Mother
 free!

O bush unburnt! burning in Moses'
 sight!

That down didst ravish from the Deity.
 Through humbleness, the spirit that did
 alight

Upon thy heart, whence, through that
 glory's might,

Conceived was the Father's sapience,

Help me to tell it in thy reverence!

IV

Lady! thy goodness, thy magnificence,
 Thy virtue, and thy great humility.

Surpass all science and all utterance;
 For sometimes, Lady! ere men pray to
 thee

Thou goest before in thy benignity,
 The light to us vouchsafing of thy prayer,

To be our guide unto thy Son so dear.

V

My knowledge is so weak, O blissful
 Queen!

To tell abroad thy mighty worthiness,
 That I the weight of it may not sustain;

But as a child of twelve months old or less,
 That laboureth his language to express,

Even so fare I; and therefore, I thee
 pray,

Guide thou my song which I of thee shall
 say.

VI

There was in Asia, in a mighty town,
 'Mong Christian folk, a street where

Jews might be,
 Assigned to them and given them for
 their own

By a great Lord, for gain and usury,
Hateful to Christ and to his company :
And through this street who list might
ride and wend ;

Free was it, and unbarred at either end.

A little school of Christian people stood
Down at the farther end, in which there

• were •
A nest of children come of Christian
blood.

That learned in that school from year to
year

Such sort of doctrine as men used there.
That is to say, to sing and read also,
As little children in their childhood do.

VIII

Among these children was a Widow's
son.

A little scholar, scarcely seven years old,
Who day by day unto this school hath
gone,

And eke, when he the image alid behold
Of Jesu's Mother, as he had been told,
This Child was wont to kneel adown and
say

Ave Marie, as he goeth by the way.

IX

This Widow thus her little Son hath
taught

Our blissful Lady, Jesu's Mother dear,
To worship aye, and he forgot it not ;
For simple infant hath a ready ear.

Sweet is the holiness of youth : and hence,
Calling to mind this matter when I may,
Saint Nicholas in my presence standeth
aye,

For he so young to Christ did reverence.

x

This little Child, while in the school he
sate

His Primer conning with an earnest cheer,
The whilst the rest their anthem-book
repeat

The *Alma Redemptoris* did he hear ;
And as he durst he drew him near and
near,

And hearkened to the words and to the
note.

Till the first verse he learned it all by rote.

xi

This Latin knew he nothing what it said,
For he too tender was of age to know ;
But to his comrade he repaired, and
prayed

That he the meaning of this song would
show,

And unto him declare why men sing so ;

This oftentimes, that he might be at ease,
This child did him beseech on his bare
knees.

xii

His Schoolfellow, who elder was than he,
Answered him thus :— ' This song, I
have heard say,

Was fashioned for our blissful Lady free ;
Her to salute, and also her to pray
To be our help upon our dying day :

If there is more in this, I know it not ;
Song do I learn,—small grammar I have
got.

xiii

' And is this song fashioned in reverence
Of Jesu's Mother ! ' said this Innocent ;

' Now, certes, I will use my diligence

To con it all ere Christmas-tide be spent ;

Although I for my Primer shall be shent,
And shall be beaten three times in an hour,

Our Lady I will praise with all my
power.

xiv

His Schoolfellow, whom he had so be-
sought,

As they went homeward taught him
privily,

And then he sang it well and fearlessly,
From word to word according to the
note :

Twice in a day it passed through his
throat ;

Homeward and schoolward whensoever
he went,

On Jesu's Mother fixed was his intent.

xv

Through all the Jewry (this before said I)

This little Child, as he came to and fro,

Full merrily then would he sing and cry,
(*O Alma Redemptoris*) high and low :

The sweetness of Christ's Mother pierced
so

His heart, that her to praise, to her to
pray,

He cannot stop his singing by the way.

xvi

The Serpent, Satan, our first foe, that
hath

His wasp's nest in Jew's heart, up-
swelled— ' O woe,

O Hebrew people ! ' said he in his wrath,

' Is it an honest thing ? Shall this be so ?

That such a Boy where'er he lists shall go

In your despite, and sing his hymns and
saws.

Which is against the reverence of our
laws ! '

XVII

From that day forward have the Jews
conspired
Out of the world this Innocent to chase;
And to this end a Homicide they hired,
That in an alley had a privy place,
And, as the Child gan to the school to
pace,
Thus cruel Jew him seized, and held him
fast
And cut his throat, and in a pit him cast.

XVIII

I say that him into a pit they threw,
A loathsome pit, whence noisome scents
exhale:
O cursed folk! away, ye Herods new!
What may your ill intentions you avail?
Murder will out; certes it will not fail;
Know, that the honour of high God may
spread,
The blood cries out on your accursed
deed.

XIX

O Martyr 'stablished in virginity!
Now may'st thou sing for aye before the
throne,
Following the Lamb celestial," quoth she.
"Of which the great Evangelist, Saint
John,
In Patmos wrote, who saith of them that
go
Before the Lamb singing continually,
That never fleshly woman they did know.

XX

Now this poor widow waiteth all that
night
After her little Child, and he came not;
For which, by earliest glimpse of morning
light,
With face all pale with dread and busy
thought,
She at the School and elsewhere him hath
sought,
Until thus far she learned, that he had
been
In the Jews' street, and there he last was
seen.

XXI

With Mother's pity in her breast enclosed
She goeth, as she were half out of her
mind,
To every place wherein she hath sup-
posed
By likelihood her little Son to find;
And ever on Christ's Mother meek and
kind
She cried, till to the Jewry she was
brought,
And him among the accursed Jews she
sought.

XXII

She asketh, and she piteously doth pray
To every Jew that dwelleth in that place
To tell her if her child had passed that
way;
They all said—Nay; but Jesu of his grace
Gave to her thought; that in a little space
She for her Son in that same spot did cry
Where he was cast into a pit hard by.

XXIII

O thou great God that dost perform thy
laud
By mouths of Innocents, lo! Here thy
might;
This gem of chastity, this emerald,
And eke of martyrdom this ruby be-
lit,
There, where with mangled throat he lay
upright,
The *Alma Redemptoris* gan to sing
So loud, that with his voice the place did
ring.

XXIV

The Christian folk that thorough the Jewry
went
Come to the spot in wonder at the thing;
And hastily they for the Provost sent;
Immediately he came, not tarrying,
And praiseth Christ that is our heavenly
King,
And eke his Mother, honour of Mankind;
Which done, he bade that they the Jews
should bind.

XXV

This Child with piteous lamentation then
Was taken up, singing his song alway;
And with procession great and pomp of
men
To the next Abbey him they bare away;
His Mother swooning by the body lay;
And scarcely could the people that were
near
Remove this second Rachel from the bier.

XXVI

Torment and shameful death to every
one
This Provost doth for those bad Jews
prepare
That of this murder wist, and that anon:
Such wickedness his judgments cannot
spare;
Who will do evil, evil shall he bear;
Them therefore with wild horses did he
draw,
And after that he hung them by the law.

XXVII

Upon his bier this Innocent doth lie
Before the altar while the Mass doth last:
The Abbot with his convent's company

Then sped themselves to bury him full
fast ;
And, when they holy water on him cast,
Yet spake this Child when sprinkled was
the water,
And sang, *O Alma Redemptoris Mater !*

XXVII

This Abbot, for he was a holy man,
As all Monks are, or surely ought to be,
In supplication to the Child began
Thus saying, 'O dear Child ! I summon
thee
In virtue of the holy Trinity
Tell me the cause why thou dost sing this
hymn,
Since that thy throat is cut, as it doth
seem.'

XXIX

'My throat is cut unto the bone, I trow,'
Said this young Child, 'and by the law
of kind,
'I should have died, yea many hours ago ;
But Jesus Christ, as in the books ye find,
Will that his glory last, and be in mind ;
And, for the worship of his Mother dear,
Yet may I sing, *O Alma* ! loud and clear.'

XXX

'This well of mercy, Jesu's Mother sweet,
After my knowledge I have loved alway ;
And in the hour when I my death did meet
To me she came, and thus to me did say,
"Thou in thy dying sing this holy lay,"
As ye have heard ; and soon as I had sung
Methought she laid a grain upon my
tongue.

XXXI

'Wherefore I sing, nor can from song
refrain,
In honour of that blissful Maiden free,
Till from my tongue off-taken is the grain ;
And after that thou said she unto me :
"My little Child, then will I come for thee :
Soon as the grain from off thy tongue
they take :
Be not dismayed, I will not thee forsake !"

XXXII

This holy Monk, this Abbot—him mean I,
Touched then his tongue, and took away
the grain ;
And he gave up the ghost full peacefully ;
And, when the Abbot had this wonder
seen,
His salt tears trickled down like showers
of rain ;
And on his face he dropped upon the
ground,
And still he lay as if he had been bound.

XXXIII

Eke the whole Convent on the payment
lay,
Weeping and praising Jesu's Mother
dear ;
And after that they rose, and took their
way,
And lifted up this Martyr from the bier,
And in a tomb of precious marble clear
Enclosed his uncorrupted body sweet.—
Where'er he be, God grant us him to
meet !

XXXIV

Young Hew of Lincoln ! in like sort laid
low
By cursed Jews—thing well and widely
known,
For it was done a little while ago—
Pray also thou for us, while here we tarry
Weak sinful folk, that God, with pitying
eye,
In mercy would his mercy multiply
On us, for reverence of his Mother
Mary !

II

THE CUCKOO AND THE NIGHTINGALE

I

THE God of Love—*ah, benedicite !*
How mighty and how great a Lord is he !
For he of low hearts can make high, of
high
He can make low, and unto death bring
nigh ;
And hard hearts he can make them kind
and free.

II

Within a little time, as hath been found,
He can make sick folk whole and fresh
and sound ;
Them who are whole in body and in mind,
He can make sick,—bind can he and
unbind
All that he will have bound, or have
unbound.

III

To tell his might, thy wit may not
suffice ;
Foolish men he can make them out of
wise ;—
For he may do all that he will devise ;
Loose livers he can make abate their vice,
And proud hearts can make tremble in a
trice.

IV

In brief, the whole of what he will, he
may ;
Against him dare not any wight say nay ;

To humble or afflict whome'er he will,
To sadden or to grieve, he hath like
skill;
But most his might he sheds on the eve
of May.

For every true heart, gentle heart and
free,
That with him is, or thinketh so to be,
Now against May shall have some stirring
—whether
To joy, or be it to some mourning; never
At other time, methinks, in like degree.

For now when they may hear the small
birds' song,
And see the budding leaves the branches
throng,
This unto their remembrance doth bring
All kinds of pleasure mix'd with sorrow-
ing;
And longing of sweet thoughts that ever
long.

And of that longing heaviness doth come,
Whence oft great sickness grows of heart
and home;
Sick are they all for lack of their desire;
And thus-in May their hearts are set on
fire,
So that they burn forth in great martyr-
dom.

In sooth, I speak from feeling, what
though now
Old am I, and to genial pleasure slow;
Yet have I felt of sickness through the
May,
Both hot and cold, and heart-aches every
day,—
How hard, alas! to bear, I only know.

Such shaking doth the fever in me keep
Through all this May that I have little
sleep;
And also 'tis not likely unto me,
That any living heart should sleepy be
In which Love's darts his fiery point doth
steep.

But tossing lately on a sleepless bed,
I of a token thought which Lovers heed;
How among them it was a common tale,
That it was good to hear the Nightingale,
Ere the vile Cuckoo's note be uttered.

And then I thought anon as it was day,
I gladly would go somewhere to essay

If I perchance a Nightingale might hear,
For yet had I heard none, of all that year,
And it was then the third night of the
May.

And soon as I a glimpse of day espied,
No longer would I in my bed abide,
But straightway to a wood that was hard
by,
Forth did I go, alone and fearlessly,
And held the pathway down by a brook-
side;

Till to a lawn I came all white and green,
I in so fair a one had never been.
The ground was green, with daisy pow-
dered over;
Tall were the flowers, the grove a lofty
cover,
All green and white; and nothing else
was seen.

There sate I down among the fair fresh
flowers,
And saw the birds come tripping from
their bowers,
Where they had rested them all night;
and they,
Who were so joyful at the light of day,
Began to honour May with all their
powers.

Well did they know that service all by
rote,
And there was many and many a lovely
note,
Some, singing loud, as if they had com-
plained;
Some with their notes another manner
feigned;
And some did sing all out with the full
throat.

They pruned themselves, and made them-
selves right gay,
Dancing and leaping light upon the spray;
And ever two and two together were,
The same as they had chosen for the year,
Upon Saint Valentine's returning day.

Meanwhile the stream, whose bank I sate
upon,
Was making such a noise as it ran on;
Accordant to the sweet Birds' harmony;
Methought that it was the best melody
Which ever to man's ear a passage won.

XVIII

And for delight, but how I never wot,
I in a slumber and a swoon was caught.
Not all asleep and yet not waking wholly;
And as I lay, the Cuckoo, bird unholy,
Broke silence, or I heard him in my
thought.

XIX

And that was right upon a tree fast by,
And who was then ill satisfied but I?
Now, God, quoth I, that died upon the
good,
From thee and thy base throat, keep all
that's good,
Full little joy have I now of thy cry.

XX

And as I with the Cuckoo thus 'gan clide,
In the next bush that was me fast beside,
I heard the lusty Nightingale so sing,
That her clear voice made a loud rioting,
Echoing thorough all the green wood
wide.

XXI

Ah! good sweet Nightingale! for my
heart's cheer
Hence hast thou stay'd a little while too
long;
For we have had the sorry Cuckoo here,
And she hath been before thee with her
song;
Evil light on her! she hath done me
wrong.

XXII

But hear you now a wondrous thing, I
prave:
As long as in that swooning-fit I lay,
Methought I wist right well what these
birds meant,
And had good knowing both of their
intent,
• And of their speech, and all that they
would say.

XXIII

The Nightingale thus in my hearing
spoke:
Good Cuckoo, seek some other bush or
brake,
And, prithee, let us that can sing dwell
here;
For every wight eschews thy song to hear,
Such unceasing singing verily dost thou
make.

XXIV

What! quoth she then, what is't that ails
thee now?
It seems to me I sing as well as thou:
For mine's a song that is both true and
plain,—

Although I cannot quaver so in vain,
As thou dost in thy throat, I wot not
how.

XXV

All men, may understanding have of me,
But, Nightingale, so may they not of
thee:
For thou hast many a foolish and quaint
cry:—
Thou say'st OSEE, OSEE, then how may I
Have knowledge, I thee pray, what this
may be?

XXVI

Ah, fool! quoth she, wist thou not what
it is?
Oft as I say OSEE, OSEE, I wis,
Then mean I, that I should be wondrous
fain
That shamefully they one and all were
slam,
Whoever against Love mean aught amiss.

XXVII

And also would I that they all were dead,
Who do not think in love their life to
lead:
For who is loth the God of Love to obey,
Is only fit to die. I dare well say,
And for that cause OSEE I cry; take
heed!

XXVIII

Ay, quoth the Cuckoo, that is a quaint
law,
That all must love or die: but I with-
draw,
And take my leave of all such company,
For mine intent it neither is to die,
Nor ever while I live Love's yoke to draw.

XXIX

For lovers of all folk that be alive,
The most disquiet have and least do
thrive:
Most feeling have of sorrow, woe and care,
And the least welfare cometh to their
share:
What need is there against the truth to
strive?

What! quoth she, thou art all out of thy
mind,
That in thy churlishness a cause cans't
find
To speak of Love's true Servants in this
mood:
For in this world no service is so good
To every wight that gentle is of kind.

XXXI

For thereof comes all goodness and all
worth;

All gentilles and honour thence come
 forth;
 Thence worship comes, content and true
 heart's pleasure,
 And full-assured trust, joy without
 measure,
 And jollity, fresh cheerfulness, and
 mirth;

XXXII

And bounty, lowliness, and courtesy,
 And seemliness, and faithful company,
 And dread of shame that will not do
 amiss;
 For he that faithfully Love's servant is,
 Rather than be disgraced, would chuse
 to die.

XXXIII

And that the very truth it is which I
 Now say—in such belief I'll live and die;
 And Cuckoo, do thou so, by my advice,
 Then, quoth she, let me never hope for
 bliss,
 If with that counsel I do e'er comply.

XXXIV

Good Nightingale! thou speakest wondrous fair,
 Yet for all that, the truth is found elsewhere;
 For Love in young folk is but rage, I wis;
 And Love in old folk a great dotage is;
 Who most it useth, him 'twill most impair.

XXXV

For thereof come all contraries to gladness;
 Thence sickness comes, and overwhelming sadness,
 Mistrust and jealousy, despite, rebate,
 Dishonour, shame, envy importunate,
 Pride, anger, mischief, povert', and madness.

XXXVI

Loving is aye an office of despair,
 And one thing is therein which is not fair;
 For whoso gets a love a little bliss,
 Unless it alway stay with him, I wis
 He may full soon go with an old man's hair.

XXXVII

And, therefore, Nightingale! do thou keep nigh,
 For trust me well, in spite of thy quaint cry,
 If long time from thy mate thou be, or far,
 Thou'lt be as others that forsaken are;
 Then shalt thou raise a clamour as do I.

XXXVIII

Fie, quoth she, on thy name, Bird ill beseen!
 The God of Love afflict thee with all teen,
 For thou art worse than mad a thousand fold;
 For many a one hath virtues manifold,
 Who had been noight, if Love had never been.

XXXIX

For evermore his servants Love amendeth,
 And he from every blemish them defendeth;
 And maketh them to burn, as in a fire,
 In loyalty, and worshipful-desire,
 And, when it likes him, joy enough them sendeth.

XL

Thou Nightingale! the Cuckoo said, be still,
 For Love no reason hath, but his own will;
 For to th' untrue he oft gives ease and joy;
 True lovers doth so bitterly annoy,
 He lets them perish through that grievous ill.

XLI

With such a master would I never be;
 For he, in sooth, is blind, and may not see,
 And knows not when he hurts and when he heals;
 Within this court full seldom Truth avails,
 So diverse in his wilfulness is he.

XLII

Then of the Nightingale did I take note,
 How from her inmost heart a sigh she brought,
 And said, Alas! that ever I was born,
 Not one word have I now, I am so forlorn,
 And with that word, she into tears burst out.

XLIII

Alas, alas! my very heart will break,
 Quoth she, to hear this churlish bird thus speak
 Of Love, and of his holy services;
 Now, God of Love! thou help me in some wise,
 That vengeance on this Cuckoo I may wreak.

From a manuscript in the Bodleian, as are also stanzas 44 and 45, which are necessary to complete the sense.

XLIV

And so methought I started up anon,
And to the brook I ran and got a stone,
Which at the Cuckoo hardly I cast,
And he for dread did fly away full fast ;
And glad, in sooth, was I when he was
gone.

XLV

And ~~the~~ the Cuckoo, ever and aye,
Kept crying, " Farewell !—farewell, Pop-
injay ! "

~~And~~ in scornful mockery of me :
And on I hunted him from tree to tree,
Till he was far, all out of sight, away.

XLVI

Then straightway came the Nightingale
to me.

And said, Forsooth, my friend, do I thank
thee,

That thou wert near to rescue me ; and
now,

Unto the God of Love I make a vow,
That all this May I will thy songstress be.

XLVII

Well satisfied, I thanked her, and she said,
By this mishap no longer be dismayed,
Though thou the Cuckoo heard, ere thou
' heard'st me ;
Yet if I live it shall amended be,
When next May comes, if I am not afraid.

XLVIII

And one thing will I counsel thee also ;
The Cuckoo trust not thou, nor his Love's
saw ;

All that she said is an outrageous lie.
Nay, nothing shall me bring thereto,
quoth I,

For Love, and it hath done me mighty
woe.

XLIX

Yea, hath it ? use, quoth she, this medi-
cine ;

This May-time, every day before thou
dine,

Go look on the fresh daisy ; then say I,
Although for pain thou may'st be like to
die,

Thou wilt be eased, and less wilt droop,
and pine.

L

And mind always that thou be good and
true,

And I will sing one song, of many new,
For love of thee, as loud as I may cry ;
And then did she begin this song full high,
" Beshrew all them that are in love un-
true."

LI

And soon as she had sung it to the end,
Now farewell, quoth she, for I hence must
wend ;

And, God of Love, that can right well and
may,

Send unto thee as mickle joy this day,
As ever he to Lover yet did send.

LII

Thus takes the Nightingale her leave of
me ;

I pray to God with her always to be,
And joy of love to send her evermore ;
And shield us from the Cuckoo and her
lore,

For there is not so false a bird as she.

LIII

Forth then she flew, the gentle Nightin-
gale,

To all the Birds that lodged within that
dale,

And gathered each and all into one place ;
And them besought to hear her doleful
case,

And thus it was that she began her tale.

LIV

The Cuckoo—'tis not well that I should
hide

How she and I did each the other chide,
And without ceasing, since it was day-
light ;

And now I pray you all to do me right
Of that false Bird whom Love cannot
abide.

LV

Then spake one Bird, and full assent all
gave ;

This matter asketh counsel good as grave,
For birds we are—all here together
brought ;

And, in good sooth, the Cuckoo here is
not ;

And therefore we a Parliament will have.

LVI

And thereat shall the Eagle be our Lord,
And other Peers, whose names are on
record ;

A summons to the Cuckoo shall be sent,
And judgment there be given ; or that
intent

Failing, we finally shall make accord.

LVII

And all this shall be done, without a nay,
The morrow after Saint Valentine's day,
Under a maple that is well beseen,
Before the chamber-window of the Queen,
At Woodstock, on the meadow green and
gay.

LVIII

She thanked them ; and then her leave
she took,

And flew into a hawthorn by that brook ;
And there she sate, and sung—upon that
tree—

“ For term of life Love shall have hold of
me ”—

So loudly, that I with that song awoke.

Unlearned Book and rude, as well I know,
For beauty thou hast none, nor eloquence,
Who did on thee the hardness bestow
To appear before my Lady ? but a sense
Thou surely hast of her benevolence,
Whereof her hourly bearing proof doth
give :

For of all good she is the best alive.

Alas, poor Book ! for thy unworthiness,
To show to her some pleasant meanings
writ

In winning words, since through her
gentleness,

Thee she accepts as for her service fit !
Oh ! it repents me I have neither wit
Nor leisure unto thee more worth to give ;
For of all good she is the best alive.

Beseech her meekly with all lowliness,
Though I be far from her I reverence,
To think upon my truth and stedfastness,
And to abridge my sorrow's violence,
Caused by the wish, as knows your
sapience,

She of her liking proof to me would give ;
For of all good she is the best alive.

L'ENVOY

Pleasure's Aurora, Day of gladness !
Luna by night, with heavenly influence
Illumined ! root of beauty and goodness,
Write, and allay, by your beneficence,
My sighs breathed forth in silence—com-
fort give !

Since of all good, you are the best alive.

EXPLICIT

III

TROIUS AND CRESIDA

Next morning ~~they~~ began to clear
His eyes from sleep, at the first break of
day,

And unto Pandarus, his own Brother,
dear,

For love of God, full piteously did say,
We must the Palace see of Cresida ;
For since we yet may have no other feast,
Let us behold her Palace at the least !

And therewithal to cover his intent
A cause he found into the Town to go,
And they right forth to Cresid's Palace
went ;

But, Lord, this simple Troilus was woe,
Him thought his sorrowful heart would
break in two ;

For when he saw her doors fast bolted all,
Well nigh for sorrow down he 'gan to fall.

Therewith when this true Lover 'gan
behold,

How shut was every window of the place,
Like frost he thought his heart was icy
cold :

For which, with changed, pale, and
deadly face,

Without word uttered, forth he 'gan to
pace :

And on his purpose bent so fast to ride,
That no wight his continuance espied.

Then said he thus,—O Palace desolate !
O house of houses, once so richly dight !

O Palace empty and disconsolate !
Thou lamp of which extinguished is the
light :

O Palace whilom day that now art night,
Thou ought'st to fall and I to die ; since
she

Is gone who held us both in sovereignty.

O, of all houses once the crowned boast !
Palace illumined with the sun of bliss ;
O ring of which the ruby now is lost,
O cause of woe, that cause has been of
bliss :

Yet, since I may no better, would I kiss
Thy cold doors ; but I dare not for this
rout ;

Farewell, thou shrine of which the Saint
is out !

Therewith he cast on Pandarus an eye,
With changed face, and piteous to behold ;
And when he might his time aright espy,
Aye as he rode, to Pandarus he told
Both his new sorrow and his joys of old,
So piteously, and with so dead a hue,
That every wight might on his sorrow rue.

Forth from the spot he rideth up and
down,

And everything to his remembrance
Came as he rode by places of the town
Where he had felt such perfect pleasure
once

Lo, yonder saw I mine own Lady dance,
And in that Temple she with her bright
eyes,
My Lady dear, first bound me captive-
wise.

And yonder with joy-spitten heart have

Heard my own Cresid's laugh ; and once
at play

I yonder saw her eke full blissfully ;
And yonder once she unto me 'gan say—

Now, my sweet Troilus, love me well, I pray!

And there so graciously did me behold,
That hers unto the death my heart I hold.

And at the corner of that self-same house
Heard I my most beloved Lady dear,
So womanly, with voice melodious
Singing so well, so goodly, and so clear,
That in my soul methinks I yet do hear
The blissful sound; and in that very
place

My Lady first rae took unto her grace.

O blissful God of Love! then thus he
cried,

When I the process have in memory,
How thou hast wearied me on every side,
How thou hast wearied me on every side,
How thence a book might make a history,
What need to seek a conquest over me,
Since I am wholly at thy will? what joy
Hast thou thy own liege subjects to
destroy?

Dread Lord! so fearful when provoked,
thine ire

Well hast thou wreaked on me by pain
and grief:

Now mercy, Lord! thou know'st well I
desire

Thy grace above all pleasures first and
chief;

And live and die I will in thy belief;
For which I ask for guerdon but one boon,
That Cresida again thou send me soon.

Constrain her heart as quickly to return,
As thou dost mine with longing her to see,
Then know I well that she would not
sojourn.

Now, blissful Lord, so cruel do not be
Unto the blood of Troy, I pray of thee,
As Juno was unto the Theban blood,
From whence to Thebes came griefs in
multitude.

And after this he to the gate did go
Whence Cresid rode, as if in haste she
was;

And up and down there went, and to and
fro,

And to himself full oft he said, alas!
From hence my hope, and solace forth
did pass.

O would the blissful God now for his joy
I might her see again coming to Troy!

And up to yonder hill was I her guide;
Alas, and there I took of her my leave;
Yonder I saw her to her Father ride,
For very grief of which my heart shall
cleave:—

And hither home I came when it was eve;
And here I dwell an outcast from all joy,
And shall, unless I see her soon in Troy.

And of himself did he imagine oft,
That he was blighted, pale, and waxen
less

Than he was wont; and that in whispers
soft

Men said, what may it be, can no one
guess

Why Troilus hath all this heaviness?
All which he of himself conceited wholly
Out of his weakness and his melancholy.

Another time he took into his head,
That every wight, who in the way passed
by,

Had of him ruth, and fancied that they
said,

I am right sorry Troilus will die:
And thus a day or two drove wearily;
As ye have heard; such life 'gan he to
lead
As one that standeth betwixt hope and
dread.

For which it pleased him in his songs to
show

The occasion of his woe, as best he might;
And made a fitting song, of words but
few,

Somewhat his woeful heart to make more
light;

And when he was removed from all men's
sight,

With a soft night voice, he of his Lady
dear,

That absent was, 'gan sing as ye may hear.

O star, of which I lost have all the light,
With a sore heart well ought I to bewail,
That ever dark in torment, night by
night,

Toward my death with wind I steer and
sail;

For which upon the tenth night if thou
fail

With thy bright beams to guide me but
one hour,

My ship and me Charybdis will devour.

As soon as he this song had thus sung
through,

He fell again into his sorrows old;
And every night, as was his wont to do,

Troilus stood the bright moon to behold;
And all his trouble to the moon he told,

And said; I wis, when thou art horn'd
anew.

I shall be glad if all the world be true.

Thy horns were old as now upon that
morrow,

When hence did journey my bright Lady
dear.

That cause is of my torment and my
sorrow;

For which, oh, gentle Luna, bright and clear,
 For love of God, run fast above thy sphere;
 For when thy horns begin once more to spring,
 Then shall she come, that with her bliss may bring.

The day is more, and longer every night
 Than they were wont to be—for he thought so;

And that the sun did take his course not right,

By longer way than he was wont to go;
 And said, I am in constant dread I trow,
 That Phæton his son is yet alive,
 His too fond father's car amiss to drive.

Upon the walls fast also would he walk,
 To the end that he the Grecian host might see;

And ever thus he to himself would talk:—
 Lo! yonder is my own bright Lady free;

Or yonder is it that the tents must be;
 And thence does come this air which is so sweet,

That in my soul I feel the joy of it.

And certainly this wind, that more and more

By moments thus increaseth in my face,
 Is of my Lady's sighs heavy and sore;
 I prove it thus; for in no other ^{place} ~~place~~
 Of all this town, save only in this place,
 Feel I a wind, that soundeth so like pain;
 It saith, Alas, why severed are we twain?

A weary while in pain he toseth thus,
 Till fully past and gone was the ninth night;

And ever at his side stood Pandar^{us},
 Who busily made use of all his might
 To comfort him, and make his heart more light;

Giving him always hope, that "she ^{the} ~~she~~
 morrow

Of the tenth day will come, and end his sorrow.

POEMS REFERRING TO THE PERIOD OF OLD AGE

I

THE OLD CUMBERLAND BEGGAR

The class of Beggars, to which the Old Man here described belongs, will probably soon be extinct. It consisted of poor, and, mostly, old and infirm persons, who confined themselves to a stated round in their neighbourhood, and had certain fixed days, on which, at different houses, they regularly received alms, sometimes in money, but mostly in provisions.

I saw an aged Beggar in my walk;
 And he was seated, by the highway side,
 On a low structure of rude masonry
 Built at the foot of a huge hill, that they
 Who lead their horses down the steep
 rough road

May thence remount at ease. The aged
 Man

Had placed his staff across the broad
 smooth stone

That overlays the pile; and, from a bag
 All white with flour, the dole of village
 dames,

He drew his scraps and fragments, one by
 one;

And scanned them with a fixed and
 serious look

Of idle computation. In the sun,
 Upon the second step of that small pile,
 Surrounded by those wild unpeopled hills,
 He sat, and ate his food in solitude:

And ever, scattered from his palsied hand,

That, still attempting to prevent the
 waste,

Was baffled still, the crumbs in little
 showers

Fell on the ground; and the small moun-
 tain birds,

Not venturing yet to peck their destined
 meal,

Approached within the length of half his
 staff.

Him from my childhood have I known;
 and then

He was so old, he seems not older now;
 He travels on, a solitary Man,

So helpless in appearance, that for him
 The sauntering Horseman throws not
 with a slack

And careless hand his alms upon the
 ground,

But stops—that he may safely lodge the
 coin

Within the old Man's hat; nor quits him
 so,

But still, when he has given his horse the
 rein,

Watches the aged Beggar with a look
 Sidelong, and half-reverted. She who
 tends

The toll-gate, when in summer at her door
 She turns her wheel, if on the road she sees

The aged beggar coming, quits her work,

And lifts the latch for him that he may pass.

The post-boy, when his rattling wheels o'ertake

The aged Beggar in the woody lane,
Shouts to him from behind; and, if thus warned

The old man does not change his course,
The boy

Turns ~~with~~ ^{his} noisy wheels to the road-side,

And passes gently by, without a curse
Upon his lips, or anger at his heart.

He travels on, a solitary Man;
His age has no companion. On the ground

His eyes are turned, and, as he moves along,

They move along the ground; and, evermore,

Instead of common and habitual sight
Of fields with rural works, of hill and dale,

And the blue sky, one little span of earth
Is all his prospect. Thus, from day to day,

Bow-bent, his eyes for ever on the ground,
He plies his weary journey: seeing still,

And seldom knowing that he sees, some straw,

Some scattered leaf, or marks which, in one track,

The nails of cart or chariot-wheel have left
Impressed on the white road—in the same line,

At distance still the same. Poor Travel-ler!

His staff trails with him; scarcely do his feet

Disturb the summer dust; he is so still
In look and motion, that the cottage curs,

Ere he has passed the door, will turn
.....

Weary of barking at him. Boys and girls,
The vacant and the busy, maids and youths,

And urchins newly breeched—all pass him by:

Him even the slow-paced waggon leaves behind.

But deem not this Man useless.—
Statesmen! ye

Who are so restless in your wisdom, ye
Who have a broom still ready in your hands

To rid the world of nuisances; ye proud,
Heart-swollen, while in your pride ye con-tem-plate

Your talents, power, or wisdom, deem him not

A burthen of the earth! 'Tis Nature's law

That none, the meanest of created things,
Of forms created the most vile and brute,

The dullest or most noxious, should exist
Divorced from good—a spirit and pulse of good,

A life and soul, to every mode of being
Inseparably linked. Then be assured

That lest of all can'ought—that ever owned

The heaven-regarding eye and front sublime

Which man is born to sink, how'er depressed,

So low as to be scorned without a sin;
Without offence to God cast out of view;

Like the dry remnant of a garden-flower
Whose seeds are shed, or as an implement

Worn out and worthless. While from door to door,

This old Man creeps, the villagers in him
Behold a record which together binds

Past deeds and offices of charity,
Else unremembered, and so keeps alive

The kindly mood in hearts which lapse of years,
And that half-wisdom half-experience

gives,
Make slow to feel, and by sure steps resign

To selfishness and cold oblivious cares,
Among the farms and solitary huts,

Hamlets and thinly-scattered villages,
Where'er the aged Beggar takes his

rounds,
The mild necessity of use compels

To acts of love; and habit does the work
Of reason; yet prepares that after-joy

Which reason cherishes. And thus the soul,

By that sweet taste of pleasure unpursued,
Both had herself insensibly disposed

To virtue and true goodness.

Some there are,
By their good works exalted, lofty minds

And meditative, authors of delight
And happiness, which to the end of time

Will live, and spread, and kindle: even such minds

In childhood, from this solitary Being,
Or from like wanderer, haply have received

(A thing more precious far than all that books

Or the solicitudes of love can do!)
That first mild touch of sympathy and thought,

In which they found their kindred with a world

Where want and sorrow were. The easy man

Who sits at his own door—and, like the pe-ri-

That overhangs his head from the green wall,

Feeds in the sunshine; the robust and young,

The prosperous and unthinking, they
 who live
 Sheltered, and flourish in a little grove
 Of their own kindred :—all behold in him
 A silent monitor, which on their minds
 Must needs impress a transitory thought
 Of self-congratulation, to the heart
 Of each recalling his peculiar boons,
 His charters and exemptions : and, per-
 chance,
 Though he to no one give the fortitude
 And circumspection needful to preserve
 His present blessings, and to husband up
 The respite of the season, he, at least,
 And 'tis no vulgar service, makes them
 felt.

Yet further.—Many, I believe, there
 are
 Who live a life of virtuous decency,
 Men who can hear the Decalogue and feel
 No self-reproach : who of the moral law
 Established in the land where they abide
 Are strict observers ; and not negligent
 In acts of love to those with whom they
 dwell,
 Their kindred, and the children of their
 blood.
 Praise be to such, and to their slumbers
 peace !
 —But of the poor man ask, the abject
 poor ;
 Go, and demand of him, if there be here
 In this cold abstinence from evil deeds,
 And these inevitable charities,
 Wherewith to satisfy the human soul ?
 No—man is dear to man ; the poorest
 poor
 Long for some moments in a weary life
 When they can know and feel that they
 have been,
 Themselves, the fathers and the dealers-
 out
 Of some small blessings : have been kind
 to such
 As needed kindness, for this single cause,
 That we have all of us one human heart.
 —Such pleasure is to one kind Being
 known,
 My neighbour, when with punctual care,
 each week,
 Duly as Friday comes, though pressed
 herself
 By her own wants, she from her store of
 meal
 Takes one unsparing handful for the scrip
 Of this old Mendicant, and, from her door
 Returning with exhilarated heart,
 Sits by her fire, and builds her hope in
 heaven.
 Then let him pass, a blessing on his
 head !
 And while in that vast solitude to which

The tide of things has borne him, he
 appears
 To breathe and live but for himself alone,
 Unblamed, uninjured, let him bear about
 The good which the benignant law of
 Heaven
 Has hung around him : and, while life is
 his,
 Still let him prompt the unlettered
 villagers
 To tender offices and pensive thoughts.
 —Then let him pass, a blessing on his
 head !
 And, long as he can wander, let him
 breathe
 The freshness of the valleys ; let his
 blood
 Struggle with frosty air and winter snows ;
 And let the chartered wind that sweeps
 the heath
 Beat his grey locks against his withered
 face.
 Feverence the hope whose vital anxious-
 ness
 Gives the last human interest to his heart.
 May never house, misnamed of INDUS-
 TRY,
 Make him a captive !—for that pent-up
 dun,
 Those life-consuming sounds that clog
 the air,
 Be his the natural silence of old age !
 Let him be free of mountain solitudes ;
 And have around him, whether heard or
 not,
 The pleasant melody of woodland birds.
 Few are his pleasures : if his eyes have
 now
 Been doomed so long to settle upon earth
 That not without some effort they behold
 The countenance of the horizontal sun,
 Rising or setting, let the light at least
 Find a free entrance to their languid orbs.
 And let him, *where* and *when* he will, sit
 down
 Beneath the trees, or on a grassy bank
 Of highway side, and with the little birds
 Share his chance-gathered meal ; and,
 finally,
 As in the eye of Nature he has lived,
 So in the eye of Nature let him die.

1798.

II

THE FARMER OF TILSBURY VALE
 'Tis not for the unfeeling, the falsely re-
 hined,
 The squeamish in taste, and the narrow
 of mind,
 And the small critic wielding his delicate
 pen,
 That I sing of old Adam, the pride of old
 men.

He dwells in the centre of London's wide
Town ;
His staff is a sceptre—his grey hairs a
crown ;
And his bright eyes look brighter, set off
by the streak
Of the unfaded rose that still blooms on
his cheek.

'Mid the dews, in the sunshine of morn,—
mid the joy
Of the fields, he collected that bloom,
when a boy ;
That countenance there fashioned, which,
in spite of a stain
That his life hath received, to the last
will remain.

A Farmer he was : and his house far and
near
Was the boast of the country for excellent
cheer ;
How oft have I heard in sweet Tilsbury
Vale
Of the silver-tipped horn whence he
dealt his mild ale !

Yet Adam was far as the farthest from
ruin,
His fields seemed to know what their
Master was doing ;
And turps, and corn-land, and meadow,
and lea,
All caught the infection—as generous as
he.

Yet Adam prized little the feast and the
bowl,—
The fields better suited the ease of his
soul :
He strayed through the fields like an in-
dolent wight.
The quiet of nature was Adam's delight.
For Adam was simple in thought : and
the poor,
Familiar with him, made an inn of his
door :
He gave them the best that he had ; or,
to say
What less may mislead you, they took
it away.

Thus thirty smooth years did he thrive on
his farm :
The Genius of plenty preserved him from
harm :
At length what, to most is a season of
sorrow,
His means are run out,—he must beg, or
must borrow.

To the neighbour he went,—all were free
with their money ;
For his hive had so long been replenished
with honey,

W.P.

That they dreamt not of dearth ;—He
continued his rounds,
Knocked here—and knocked there,
pounds still adding to pounds.

He paid what he could with his ill-gotten
pelf.
And something, it might be, reserved for
himself :
Then (what is too true) without hinting
a word,
Turned his back on the country—and
off like a bird.

You lift up your eyes !—but I guess that
you frame
A judgment too harsh of the sin and the
shame ;
In him it was scarcely a business of art,
For this he did all in the ease of his heart.

To London—a sad emigration I ween—
With his grey hairs he went from the
brook and the green ;
And there, with small wealth but his legs
and his hands,
As lonely he stood as a crow on the sands.

All trades, as need was, did old Adam
assume,—
Served as stable-boy, errand-boy, porter,
and groom :
But nature is gracious, necessity kind,
And, in spite of the shame that may lurk
in his mind,

He seems ten birthdays younger, is green
and is stout.
Twice as fast as before does his blood run
about :
You would say that each hair of his beard
was alive,
And his fingers are busy as bees in a hive.

For he's not like an Old Man that leisurely
goes
About work that he knows, in a track
that he knows :
But often his mind is compelled to demur,
And you guess that the more then his
body must stir.

In the throng of the town like a stranger
is he,
Like one whose own country's far over
the sea ;
And Nature, while through the great city
he hies,
Full ten times a day takes his heart by
surprise.

This gives him the fancy of one that is
young.
More of soul in his face than of words on
his tongue ;

G G,

Like a maiden of twenty he trembles and sighs,
And tears of fifteen will come into his eyes.
What's a tempest to him, or the dry parching heats?
Yet he watches the clouds that pass over the streets;
With a look of such earnestness often will stand,
You might think he'd twelve reapers at work in the Strand.
Where proud Covent-garden, in desolate hours
Of snow and hoar-frost, spreads her fruits and her flowers,
Old Adam will smile at the pains that have made
Poor winter look fine in such strange masquerade.
'Mid coaches and chariots, a waggon of straw,
Like a magnet, the heart of old Adam can draw;
With a thousand soft pictures his memory will teem,
And his hearing is touched with the sounds of a dream.
Up the Haymarket hill he oft whistles his way,
Thrusts his hands in a waggon, and smells at the hay;
He thinks of the fields he so often hath known,
And is happy as if the rich freight were his own.
But chiefly to Smithfield he loves to repair,—
If you pass by at morning, you'll meet with him there.
The breath of the cows you may see him inhale,
And his heart all the while is in Tilsbury Vale.
Now farewell, old Adam! when low thou art laid,
May one blade of grass spring up over thy head;
And I hope that thy grave, wheresoever it be,
Will hear the wind sigh through the leaves of a tree.

1803.

III

THE SMALL CELANDINE

THERE is a Flower, the lesser Celandine,
That shrinks, like many more, from cold and rain;

And, the first moment that the sun may shine,
Bright as the sun himself, 'tis out again!
When hailstones have been falling, swarm on swarm,
Or blasts the green field and the trees distress,
Oft have I seen it muffled up from harm.
In close self-shelter, like a Thing at rest.
But lately, one rough day, ~~the~~ I passed
And recognised it, though an altered form.
Now standing forth an offering to the blast,
And buffeted at will by rain and storm.
I stopped, and said with inly-muttered voice,
"It doth not love the shower, nor seek the cold:
This neither is its courage nor its choice,
But its necessity in being old.
The sunshine may not cheer it, nor the dew;
It cannot help itself in its decay;
Stiff in its members, withered, changed of hue."
And, in my spleen, I smiled that it was grey.
To be a Prodigal's Favourite—then, worse truth,
A Miser's Pensioner—behold our lot!
O Man, that from thy fair and shining Youth
Age might but take the things Youth needed not!

1804.

IV

THE TWO THIEVES;

OR,

THE LAST STAGE OF AVARICE

OW now that the genius of Bewick were mine,
And the skill which he learned on the banks of the Tyne,
Then the Muses might deal with me just as they chose,
For I'd take my last leave both of verse and of prose.
What feats would I work with my magical hand,
Book-learning and books should be banished the land;
And, for hunger and thirst and such troublesome calls,
Every ale-house should then have a feast on its walls.

The traveller would hang his wet clothes
on a chair;
Let them smoke, let them burn, not a
straw would he care!
For the Prodigal Son, Joseph's Dream
and his sheaves,
Oh, what would they be to my tale of two
Thieves?

The One, yet unbreeched, is not three
birthdays old,
His ~~care~~ ^{care} that age more than thirty
times told;

There are ninety good seasons of fair and
of weather
Between them, and both go a-pilfering
together.

With chip is the carpenter strewing his
floor?
Is cart-load of turf at an old woman's
door?

Old Daniel his hand to the treasure will
slide!

And his Grandson is as busy at work by
his side.

Old Daniel begins: he stops short— and
his eye,
Through the lost look of dotage, is cunning
and sly:

'Tis a look which at this time is hardly
his own,
But tells a plain tale of the days that are
flown.

He once had a heart which was moved by
the wires
Of manifold pleasures and many desires:
And what if he cherished his purse?
'Twas no more
Than treading a path trod by thousands
before.

'Twas a path trod by thousands; but
Daniel is one

Who went something farther than others
have gone, [fares:
And now with old Daniel you see how it
You see to what end he has brought his
grey hairs.

The pair sally forth hand in hand: ere the
sun

Has peered o'er the beeches, their work
is begun:

And yet, into whatever sin they may fall,
This child but half knows it, and that not
at all.

They hunt through the streets with de-
liberate tread,
And each, in his turn, becomes leader or
led:
And, wherever they carry their plots and
their wiles,
Every face in the village is dimpled with
smiles.

Neither checked by the rich nor the needy
they roam:
For the grey-headed Sire has a daughter
at home,
Who will gladly repair all the damage
that's done;
And three, were it asked, would be ren-
dered for one.

Old Man! whom so oft I with pity have
eyed,
I love thee, and love the sweet Boy at
thy side,
Long yet may'st thou live! for a teacher
we see
That lifts up the veil of our nature in
thee.

1800.

V

ANIMAL TRANQUILLITY AND
DECAY

THE little hedgerow birds,
That peck along the road, regard him not.
He travels on, and in his face, his step,
His gait, is one expression: every limb,
His look and bending figure, all bespeak
A man who does not move with pain, but
moves

With thought.—He is insensibly subdued
To settled quiet: he is one by whom
All effort seems forgotten: one to whom
Long patience hath such mild composure
given,

That patience now doth seem a thing of
which

He hath no need. He is by nature led
To peace so perfect that the young behold
With envy, what the ~~Old Man~~ hardly
feels.

1798.

EPITAPHS AND ELEGIAC PIECES

EPITAPHS

TRANSLATED FROM CHIABRERA

I

WEEP not, beloved Friends ! nor let the
air

For me with sighs be troubled. Not from
life

Have I been taken ; this is genuine life
And this alone—the life which now I live
In peace eternal ; where desire and joy
Together move in fellowship without
end.—

Francesco Ceni willed that, after death,
His tombstone thus should speak for him.

And surely

Small cause there is for that fond wish
of ours

Long to continue in this world ; a world
That keeps not faith, nor yet can point a
hope

To good, whereof itself is destitute.

II

PERHAPS some needful service of the
State

Drew Titus from the depth of studious
bowers,

And doomed him to contend in faithless
courts,

Where gold determines between right and
wrong.

Yet did at length his loyalty of heart,
And his pure native genius, lead him back
To wait upon the bright and gracious
Muses,

Whom he had early loved. And not in

Such course he held ! Bologna's learned
schools

Were gladdened by the Sage's voice, and
hung

With fondness on those sweet Nestorian
strains.

There pleasure crowned his days ; and
all his thoughts

Aroseate fragrance breathed.—O human
life,

That never art secure from dolorous
change !

Who hold a high injunction suddenly

When Arno's side hath brought him, and he
charmed
uscan audience : but full soon was
called

Vivea giocondo e i suoi pensieri

and tutti rose.

THERE, translator had not skill to come nearer
That original,

To the perpetual silence of the grave.
Moury. Italy, the loss of him who stood
A Champion steadfast and invincible,
To quell the rage of literary War !

III

O THOU who movest onward with a mind
Intent upon thy way, pause, though in
haste !

'Twill be no fruitless moment. I was
born

Within Savona's walls, of gentle blood.—
On Tiber's banks my youth was dedicate

To sacred studies ; and the Roman
Shepherd

Gave to my charge Urbino's numerous
flock.

Well did I watch, much laboured, nor had
power

To escape from many and strange in-
dignities ;

Was smitten by the great ones of the
world, „ „

But did not fall ; for Virtue braves all
shocks.

Upon herself resting immoveably.

Me did a kinder fortune then invite

To serve the glorious Henry, King of
France,

And in his hands I saw a high reward
Stretched out for my acceptance,—but

Death came.

Now, Reader, learn from this my fate,
how false,

How treacherous to her promise, is the
world ;

And trust in God—to whose eternal doom
Must bend the sceptred Potentates of
earth.

IV

THERE never breathed a man who, when
his life

Was closing, might not of that life relate
Toils long and hard.—The warrior will

report

Of wounds, and bright swords flashing in
the field,

And blast of trumpets. He who hath
been doomed

To bow his forehead in the courts of kings,
'Twill tell of fraud and never-ceasing hate,

Envy and heart-inquietude, derived
From intricate cabals of treacherous

friends

I, who on shipboard lived from earliest
youth,

Could represent the countenance horrible
Of the vexed waters, and the indignant

rage

Of Auster and Roëtes. Fifty years
Over the well-steered galleys did I rule:—
From huge Pelorus to the Atlantic
pillars,
Rises no mountain to mine eyes unknown:
And the broad gulfs I traversed oft and
oft
Of every cloud which in the heavens
might stir
I knew the force: and hence the rough
Avalued not to my Vessel's overthrow.
What noble pomp and frequent have not
On regal decks beheld: yet in the end
I learned that one poor moment can
suffice
To equalise the lofty and the low.
We sail the sea of life—a *Calm* One finds.
And One a *Tempest*—and, the voyage
o'er,
Death is the quiet haven of us all.
If more of my condition ye would know,
Savona was my birth-place, and I sprang
Of noble parents: seventy years and
three
Lived I—then yielded to a slow disease.

V

True is it that Ambrosio Salinero
With an untoward fate was long involved
In odious litigation; and full long,
Fate harder still! had he to endure
assaults
Of racking malady. And true it is
That not the less a frank courageous
heart
And buoyant spirit triumphed over pain;
And he was strong to follow in the steps
Of the fair Muses. Not a covert path
Leads to the dear Parnassian forest's
shade,
That might from him be hidden; not a
track
Mounts to pellucid Hippocrene, but he
Had traced its windings.—This Savona
knows.
Yet no sepulchral honours to her Son
She paid, for in our age the heart is ruled
Only by gold. And now a simple stone
Inscribed with this memorial here is
raised
By his bereft, his lonely, Chiabrera.
Think not, O Passenger! who read'st
the lines
That an exceeding love hath dazzled me;
No—he was One whose memory ought to
spread
Where'er Permeßus bears an honoured
name,
And live as long as its pure stream shall
flow.

VI

DESTINED to war from very infancy
Was I, Roberto Dati, and I took
In Malta the white symbol of the Cross:
Nor in life's vigorous season did I shun
Hazard or toil; among the sands was
seen
Of Libya: and not seldom, on the banks
Of wide Hungarian Danube, 'twas my lot
To hear the sanguinary trumpet sounded.
So lived I, and repined not at such fate:
This only grieves me, for it seems a wrong,
That stripped of arms I to my end am
brought
On the soft down of my paternal home.
Yet haply Arno shall be spared all cause
To blush for me. Thou, loiter not nor
halt
In thy appointed way, and bear in mind
How fleeting and how frail is human life!

VII

O FLOWER of all that springs from gentle
blood,
And all that generous nurture breeds to
make
Youth amiable; O friend so true of soul
To fair Aglaia; by what envy moved,
Lelhus! has death cut short thy brilliant
day
In its sweet opening? and what dire mis-
hap
Has from Savona torn her best delight?
For thee she mourns, nor e'er will cease
to mourn;
And, should the out-pourings of her eyes
suffice not
For her heart's grief, she will entreat
Sebeto
Not to withhold his bounteous aid,
Sebeto
Who saw thee, on his margin, yield to
death,
In the chaste arms of thy beloved Love!
What profit riches? what does youth
avail?
Dust are our hopes;—I, weeping bitterly,
Penned these sad lines, nor can forbear
to pray
That every gentle Spirit hither led
May read them not without some bitter
tears.

VIII

NOT without heavy grief of heart did He
On whom the duty fell (for at that time
The father sojourned in a distant land)
Deposit in the hollow of this tomb
A brother's Child, most tenderly beloved!
FRANCESCO was the name the Youth had
borne,
POZZOBONNELLI his illustrious house;
And, when beneath this stone the Corse
was laid,

The eyes of all Savona streamed with tears.

Alas ! the twentieth April of his life
Had scarcely flowered : and at this early
time,

By genuine virtue he inspired a hope
That greatly cheered his country : to his
kin

He promised comfort, and the flattering
thoughts

His friends had in their fondness enter-
He suffered not to languish or decay.
Now is there not good reason to break
forth

Into a passionate lament ?—O Soul !
Short while a Pilgrim in our nether world,
Do thou enjoy the calm epyrcal air ;
And round this earthly tomb let roses rise.
An everlasting spring in memory
Of that delightful fragrance which was
once

From thy mild manners quietly exhaled.

IX

PAUSE, courteous Spirit !—Balm suppli-
cates

That Thou, with no reluctant voice, for
him

Here laid in mortal darkness, wouldst
A prayer to the Redeemer of the world
This to the dead by sacred right belongs :
All else is nothing.—Did occasion suit
To tell his worth, the marble of this tomb
Would ill suffice : for Plato's lore sublime,
And all the wisdom of the Stagyrte,
Enriched and beautified his studious
mind :

With Archimedes also he conversed
As with a chosen friend : nor did he leave
Those laureat wreaths ungathered which
the Nymphs

Twine near their loved Permessus.—
Finally,

Himself above each lower thought up-
His ears he closed to listen to the songs :
Which Zion's Kings did consecrate of old :
And his Permessus found on Lebanon.
A blessed Man ! who of protracted days
Made not, as thousands do, a vulgar
sleep ;

But truly did *He* live his life. Urbino,
Take pride in him !—O Passenger, fare-
well !

I

By a blest Husband guided, Mary came
From nearest kindred, Vernon her new
name ;

¹ In justice to the Author, I subjoin the
original :—

—e degli amici
Non lasciava languire i bei pensieri.

She came, though meek of soul, in seemly
pride

Of happiness and hope, a youthful Bride.
O dread reverse ! if aught *be* so, which
proves

That God will chasten whom he dearly
loves.

Faith bore her up through pains in mercy
given.

And troubles that were each a step to
Heaven.

Two Babes were laid in earth before she
died.

A third now slumbers at the Mother's side ;
Its Sister-twin survives, whose smiles
afford

A trembling solace to her widowed
Lord.

Reader ! if to thy bosom cling the pain
Of recent sorrow combated in vain :

Or if thy cherished grief have failed to
thwart

Time still intent on his insidious part,
Lulling the mourner's best good thoughts
asleep.

Suffering regrets we would, but cannot,
keep :

Bear with Him—judge *Him* gently who
make known

His bitter loss by this memorial Stone :
And pray that in his faithful breast the
grace

Of resignation find a hallowed place.

II

Six months to six years added he remained
Upon this sinful earth, by sin unstained :

O blessed Lord ! whose mercy then re-
moved

A Child whom every eye that looked on
loved :

Support us, teach us calmly to resign
What we possessed, and now is wholly
thine !

III

CENOTAPH

In affectionate remembrance of Frances Fer-
mor, whose remains are deposited in the church
of Claines, near Worcester, this stone is erected
by her sister, Dame Margaret, wife of Sir George
Beaumont, Bart., who, feeling not less than the
love of a brother for the deceased, commends
this memorial to the care of his heirs and suc-
cessors in the possession of this place.

By vain affections unenthralled,
Though resolute when duty called
To meet the world's broad eye,
Pure as the holiest cloistered nun
That ever feared the tempting sun,
Did Fermor live and die.

This Tablet, hallowed by her name,
One heart-relieving tear may claim;
But if the pensive gloom
Of fond regret be still thy choice,
Exalt thy spirit, hear the voice
Of Jesus from her tomb!

'I AM THE WAY, THE TRUTH, AND THE LIFE.'

IV

EPITAPH

IN THE CHAPEL-YARD OF LANGDALE, WESTMORE-
LAND

By playful smiles, (alas! too oft
A sad heart's sunshine) by a soft
And gentle nature, and a free,
Yet modest hand of charity,
Through life was OWEN LLOYD endeared
To young and old: and how revered
Had been that pious spirit, a tide
Of humble mourners testified,
When, after pains dispensed to prove
The measure of God's chastening love,
Here, brought from far, his corse found
rest.

Fulfilment of his own request:—
Urged less for this Yew's shade, though he
Planted with such fond hope the tree;
Less for the love of stream and rock,
Dear as they were, than that his Flock,
When they no more their Pastor's voice
Could hear to guide them in their choice
Through good and evil, help might have,
Admonished, from his silent grave,
Of righteousness, of sins forgiven,
For peace on earth and bliss in heaven

V

ADDRESS TO THE SCHOLARS OF
THE VILLAGE SCHOOL OF—

1798.

I COME, ye little noisy Crew,
Not long your pastime to prevent;
I heard the blessing which to you
Our common Friend and Father sent.
I kissed his cheek before he died;
And when his breath was fled,
I raised, while kneeling by his side,
His hand—it dropped like lead.
Your hands, dear Little-ones, do all
That can be done, will never fall
Like his till they are dead.
By night or day blow foul or fair,
Ne'er will the best of all your train
Play with the locks of his white hair,
Or stand between his knees again.

Here did he sit confined for hours;
But he could see the woods and plains,
Could hear the wind and mark the showers
Come streaming down the streaming
panes.

Now stretched beneath his grass-green
mound

He rests a prisoner of the ground.
He loved the breathing air,
He loved the sun, but if it rise
Or set, to him where now he lies,
Brings not a moment's care.
Alas! what idle words; but take
The Dirge which for our Master's sake
And yours, love prompted me to make.
The rhymes so homely in attire
With learned ears may ill agree,
But chanted by your Orphan Quire
Will make a touching melody.

DIRGE

Mourn, Shepherd, near thy old grey
stone;

Thou Angler, by the silent flood;
And mourn when thou art all alone,
Thou Woodman, in the distant wood!

Thou our blind Sailor, rich in joy
Though blind, thy tunes in sadness hum;
And mourn, thou poor half-witted Boy!
Born deaf, and living deaf and dumb.

Thou drooping sick Man, bless the Guide
Who checked or turned thy headstrong
youth,

As he before had sanctified
Thy infancy with heavenly truth.

Ye Striplings, light of heart and gay,
Bold settlers on some foreign shore,
Give, when your thoughts are turned this
way,

A sigh to him whom we deplore.

For us who here in funeral strain
With one accord our voices raise,
Let sorrow overcharged with pain
Be lost in thankfulness and praise.

And when our hearts shall feel a sting
From ill we meet or good we miss,
May touches of his memory bring
Fond healing, like a mother's kiss.

BY THE SIDE OF THE GRAVE SOME YEARS
AFTER

Long time his pulse hath ceased to beat—
But benefits, his gift, ~~his trace~~
Expressed in every eye we meet
Round this dear Vale, his native place.

To stately Hall and Cottage rude
Flowed from his life what still they hold,
Light pleasures, every day, renewed;
And blessings half a century old.

Oh true of heart, of spirit gay,
Thy faults, where not already gone
From memory, prolonged their stay
For charity's sweet sake alone.

Such solace find we for our loss ;
And what beyond this thought we crave
Comes in the promise from the Cross,
Shining upon thy happy grave.¹

VI

ELEGIAC STANZAS.

SUGGESTED BY A PICTURE OF PEEL
CASTLE, IN A STORM, PAINTED BY SIR
GEORGE BEAUMONT

I WAS thy neighbour once, thou rugged
Pile !

Four summer weeks I dwelt in sight of
thee :

I saw thee every day : and all the while
Thy Form was sleeping on a glassy sea.

So pure the sky so quiet was the air !
So like, so very like, was day to day !
Whence'er I looked, thy Image still was
there :

It trembled, but it never passed away.

How perfect was the calm ! it seemed no
sleep ;

No mood, which season takes away, or
brings ;

I could have fancied that the mighty
Deep

Was even the gentlest of all gentle
Things.

Ah ! THEN, if mine had been the Painter's
hand,

To express what then I saw : and add the
gleam,

The light that never was, on sea or land,
The consecration, and the Poet's dream ;

I would have planted thee, thou hoary
Pile,

Amid a world how different from this !
Beside a sea that could not cease to
smile ;

¹ On tranquil land, beneath a sky of bliss.

Thou shouldst have seemed a treasure-
house divine

Of peaceful years ; a chronicle of heaven ;—
Of all the sunbeams that did ever shine
The very sweetest had to thee been given.

A Picture had it been of lasting ease,
Elysian quiet, without toil or strife ;
No motion but the moving tide, a breeze,
Or merely silent Nature's breathing life.

Such, in the fond illusion of my heart,
Such Picture would I at that time have
made :

And seen the soul of truth in every part,
A steadfast peace that might not be
trayed.

¹ See upon the subject of the three foregoing
pieces the poems on pages 386, 387.

So once it would have been,—'tis so no
more ;

I have submitted to a new control :
A power is gone, which nothing can re-
store :

A deep distress hath humanised my Soul.

Not for a moment could I now behold
A smiling sea, and be what I have been :
The feeling of my loss will ne'er be old :
This, which I know, I speak with mind
serene.

Then, Beaumont, Friend ! who would
have been the Friend,

If he had lived, of Him whom I deplore,
This work of thine I blame not, but com-
mend

This sea in anger, and that dismal shore.

O 'tis a passionate Work !—yet wise and
well,

Well chosen is the spirit that is here :
That Hulk which labours in the deadly
swell,

This rueful sky, this pageantry of fear !

And this huge Castle, standing here sub-
lime,

I love to see the look with which it braves,
Cased in the unfeeling armour of old time,

The lightning, the fierce wind, and tramp-
ling waves.

Farewell, farewell the heart that lives
alone,

Housed in a dream, at distance from the
Kind !

Such happiness, wherever it be known,
Is to be pitied ; for 'tis surely blind.

But welcome fortitude, and patient cheer,
And frequent sights of what is to be
borne !

Such sights, or worse, as are before me
here,—

Not without hope we suffer and we
mourn.

1805.

VII

TO THE DAISY

SWEET Flower ! belike one day to have
A place upon thy Poet's grave,

I welcome thee once more :

But He, who was on land, at sea,
My Brother, too, in living thee,

Although he loved more silently,
Sleeps by his native shore.

Ah ! hopeful, hopeful was the day
When to that Ship he bent his way,

To govern and to guide :
His wish was gained : a little time

Would bring him back in manhood's
prime
And free for life, these hills to climb ;
With all his wants supplied.

And full of hope day followed day
While that stout Ship at anchor lay
Beside the shores of Wight ;
The May had then made all things green ;
And, floating there, in pomp serene,
That Ship was goodly to be seen.
His pride and his delight !

Yet then, when called ashore, he sought
The tender peace of rural thought :
In more than happy mood
To your abodes, bright daisy Flowers !
He then would steal at leisure hours,
And loved you glittering in your bowers,
A starry multitude.

But hark the word !—the ship is gone ;—
Returns, from her long course :—anon
Sets sail :—in season due,
Once more on English earth they stand :
But, when a third time from the land
They parted, sorrow was at hand
For Him and for his crew

Ill-fated Vessel !—ghastly shock !
—At length delivered from the rock,
The deep she hath regained :
And through the stormy night they
steer ;
Labouring for life, in hope and fear,
To reach a safer shore—how near,
Yet not to be attained !

" Silence ! " the brave Commander cried ;
To that calm word a shriek replied,
It was the last death-shriek.
—A few (my soul oft sees that sight)
Survive upon the tall mast's height ;
But one dear remnant of the night—
For Him in vain I seek.

Six weeks beneath the moving sea
He lay in slumber quietly ;
Unforced by wind or wave
To quit the Ship for which he died,
(All claims of duty satisfied ;)
And there they found him at her side ;
And bore him to the grave.

Vain service ! yet not vainly done
For this, if other end were none,
That He, who had been cast
Upon a way of life unmeet
For such a gentle Soul and sweet,
Should find an undisturbed retreat
Near what he loved, at last—

That neighbourhood of grove and field
To Him a resting-place should yield,
A meek man and a brave !
The birds shall sing and ocean make

A mournful murmur for his sake ;
And Thou, sweet Flower, shalt sleep and
wake
Upon his senseless grave.

1805.

VIII

ELEGIAC VERSES,

IN MEMORY OF MY BROTHER, JOHN
WORDSWORTH,

COMMANDER OF THE E. I. COMPANY'S SHIP THE
"EARL OF ABERGAVENNY," IN WHICH HE
PERISHED BY CALAMITOUS SHIPWRECK,
FEB. 6TH, 1805

Composed near the Mountain track, that leads
from Grasmere through Grisdale Hawes, where
it descends towards Patterdale.

1805

I

THE Sheep-boy whistled loud, and lo !
That instant, startled by the shock,
The Buzzard mounted from the rock
Deliberate and slow :
Lord of the air, he took his flight ;
Oh ! could he on that woeful night
Have lent his wing, my Brother dear,
For one poor moment's space to Thee,
And all who struggled with the Sea,
When safety was so near.

Thus in the weakness of my heart
I spoke (but let that pang be still)
When rising from the rock at will,
I saw the Bird depart.
And let me calmly bless the Power
That meets me in this unknown Flower,
Affecting type of him I mourn !
With calmness suffer and believe,
And grieve, and know that I must grieve,
Not cheerless, though forlorn.

III

Here did we stop ; and here looked round
While each into himself descends,
For that last thought of parting Friends
That is not to be found.
Hidden was Grasmere Vale from sight,
Our home, and his, his heart's delight,
His quiet heart's selected home.
But time before him melts away,
And he hath feeling of a day
Of blessedness to come.

Full soon in sorrow did I weep.
Taught that the mutual hope was dust,
In sorrow, but for higher trust,
How miserably deep !
All vanished in a single word,
A breath, a sound, and scarcely heard.
Sea—Ship—drowned—Shipwreck—so it
came,

The meek, the brave, the good, was gone;
He who had been our living John
Was nothing but a name.

V

That was indeed a parting! oh,
Glad am I, glad that it is past:
For there were some on whom it cast
Unutterable woe.
But they as well as I have gains:—
From many a humble source, to pains
Like these, there comes a mild release
Even here I feel it, even this Plant
Is in its beauty ministrant
To comfort and to peace.

VI

He would have loved thy modest grace,
Meek Flower! To Him I would have said,
"It grows upon its native bed
Beside our Parting-place:
There, cleaving to the ground, it lies
With multitude of purple eyes,
Spangling a cushion green like moss;
But we will see it, joyful tide!
Some day, to see it in its pride,
The mountain will we cross."

VII

—Brother and friend, if verse of mine
Have power to make thy virtues known,
Here let a monumental Stone
Stand—sacred as a Shrine;
And to the few who pass this way,
Traveller or Shepherd, let it say,
Long as these nighty rocks endure,—
Oh do not Thou too fondly brood,
Although deserving of all good,
On any earthly hope, however pure!

IX

LINES

Composed at Grasmere, during a walk on
Evening, after a stormy day, the Author
having just read in a Newspaper that the
dissolution of Mr. Fox was hourly expected.

Loud is the Vale! the Voice is up
With which she speaks when storms are
gone,
A mighty unison of streams!
Of all her Voices, One!

Loud is the Vale;—this inland Depth
In peace is roaring like the Sea;
Yon star upon the mountain-top
Is listening quietly.

1 The plant alluded to is the Moss Campion
(*Silene acaulis*, or *Linnaeus*). See note at the
end of the volume.

See among the "Poems on the Naming of
places" No. vi.

Sad was I, even to pain deprest,
Importunate and heavy load!
The Comforter hath found me here,
Upon this lonely road;

And many thousands now are sad—
Wait the fulfilment of their fear;
For he must die who is their stay,
Their glory disappear.

A Power is passing from the earth
To breathless Nature's dark,
But when the great and good depart
What is it more than this—

That Man, who is from God sent forth,
Doth yet again to God return?—
Such ebb and flow must ever be,
Then wherefore should we mourn?

1856.

X

INVOCATION TO THE EARTH

FEBRUARY, 1816

"Rest, rest, perturbed Earth!

O rest, thou doleful Mother of Man-
kind!"

A Spirit sang in tones more plaintive than
the wind:

"From regions where no evil thing has
birth

I come—thy stains to wash away,
Thy cherished fetters to unbind,
And open thy sad eyes upon a milder day.
The Heavens are thronged with martyrs
that have risen

From out thy noisome prison;
The penal caverns groan

With tens of thousands rent from off the
tree

Of hopeful life,—by battle's whirlwind
blown

Into the deserts of Eternity.

Unpitied havoc! Victims unlamented!

But not on high, where madness is re-
sented,

And murder causes some sad tears to flow,
Though, from the widely-sweeping blow,
The choirs of Angels spread, triumphantly
augmented.

II

"False Parent of Mankind!

Obdurate, proud, and blind,

I sprinkle thee with soft celestial dews,
Thy lost, maternal heart to re-infuse!
Scattering this far-fetched moisture from
my wings,

Upon the act a blessing I implore,

2 Importuna e grave salma.

MICHAEL ANGELO.

Of which the rivers in their secret springs,
The rivers stained so oft with human gore,
Are conscious;—may they like return no
more!

May Discord—for a Seraph's care,
Shall be attended with a bolder prayer—
May she, who once disturbed the seats of
bliss

These mortal spheres above,
Be chained for ever to the black abyss!
And thou, O rescued Earth, by peace and
love,

And merciful desires, thy sanctity
approve!

The Spirit ended his mysterious rite,
And the pure vision closed in darkness
infinite.

XI

LINES

WRITTEN ON A BLANK LEAF IN A COPY
OF THE AUTHOR'S POEM "THE EXCUR-
SION," UPON HEARING OF THE DEATH
OF THE LATE VICAR OF KENDAL

To public notice, with reluctance strong,
Did I deliver this unfinished Song;
Yet for one happy issue:—and I look
With self-congratulation on the Book
Which pious, learned, MURFITT saw and
read:—

Upon my thoughts his saintly Spirit fed;
He conned the new-born Lay with grate-
ful heart—

Foreboding not how soon he must depart:
Unweething that to him the joy was given
Which good men take with them from
earth to heaven.

XII

ELEGIAC STANZAS

(ADDRESSED TO SIR G. H. B. UPON THE
DEATH OF HIS SISTER-IN-LAW)

1824

O FOR a dirge! But why complain?
Ask rather a triumphal strain
When FERMOR's race is run:
A garland of immortal boughs
To twine around the Christian's brows,
Whose glorious work is done.

We pay a high and holy debt;
No tears of passionate regret
Shall stain this votive lay;
Ill-worthy, Beaumont! were the grief
That flings itself on wild relief
When Saints have passed away.

Sad doom, at Sorrow's shrine to kneel,
For ever covetous to feel,
And impotent to bear!

Such once was hers—to think and think
On severed love, and only sink
From anguish to despair!

But nature to its inmost part
Faith had refined; and to her heart
A peaceful cradle given:
Calm as the dew-drop's, free to rest
Within a breeze-fanned rose's breast
Till it exhales to Heaven.

Was ever Spirit that could bend
So graciously?—that could descend,
Another's need to suit,
So promptly from her lofty throne?—
In works of love, in these alone,
How restless, how minute!

Pale was her hue; yet mortal cheek
Ne'er kindled with a livelier streak
When aught had suffered wrong,—
When aught that breathes had felt a
wound:

Such look the Oppressor might confound,
However proud and strong.

But hushed be every thought that springs
From out the bitterness of things:
Her quiet is secure:
No thorns can pierce her tender feet,
Whose life was, like the violet, sweet,
As climbing jasmine, pure—

As snowdrop on an infant's grave,
Or lily heaving with the wave
That feeds it and defends:
As Vesper, ere the star hath kissed
The mountain top, or breathed the mist
That from the vale ascends.

Thou takest not away, O Death!
Thou strikest—absence perisheth,
Indifference is no more;
The future brightens on our sight;
For on the past hath fallen a light
That tempts us to adore.

XIII

ELEGIAC MUSINGS

IN THE GROUNDS OF COLEORTON HALL,
THE SEAT OF THE LATE SIR G. H.
BEAUMONT, BART.

In these grounds stands the Parish Church
wherein is a mural monument bearing an
Inscription which, in deference to the earnest
request of the deceased, is confined to name,
dates, and these words:—"Enter not into
judgment with thy servant, O LORD!"

WITH copious eulogy in prose or rhyme
Graven on the tomb we struggle against
Time,

Alas, how feebly! but our feelings rise
And still we struggle when a good man
dies:

Such offering BEAUMONT dreaded and forbade,
 A spirit meek in self-abasement clad.
 Yet *here*, at least, though few have numbered days
 That shunned so modestly the light of praise,
 His graceful manners, and the temperate ray
 Of that arch fancy which would round him play,
 Brightening a converse never known to swerve
 From courtesy and delicate reserve :
 That sense, the bland philosophy of life,
 Which checked discussion ere it warmed to strife :
 Those rare accomplishments, and varied powers,
 Might have their record among sylvan bowers.
 Oh, fled for ever ! vanished like a blast
 That shook the leaves in myriads as it passed ;—
 Gone from this world of earth, air, sea, and sky,
 From all its spirit-moving imagery,
 Intensely studied with a painter's eye,
 A poet's heart ; and, for congenial view,
 Portrayed with happiest pencil, not untrue
 To common recognitions while the line
 Flowed in a course of sympathy divine :—
 Oh ! severed, too abruptly, from delights
 That all the seasons shared with equal rights ;—
 Rapt in the grace of undismantled age,
 From soul-felt music, and the treasured page
 Lit by that evening lamp which loved to shed
 Its mellow lustre round thy honored head ;
 While Friends beheld thee give with eye, voice, mien,
 More than theatric force to Shakespeare's scene :—
 If thou hast heard me—if thy Spirit know
 Aught of these bowers and whence their pleasures flow ;
~~Things in our remembrance held so dear,~~
 And thoughts and projects fondly cherished here,
 To thy exalted nature only seem
 Time's vanities, light fragments of earth's dream—
 Rebuke us not !—The mandate is obeyed
 That said, " Let praise be mute where I am laid ;"
 The hiler Deprecation, given in trust
 To the cold marble, waits upon thy dust ;
 Yet have we found how slowly genuine grief

From *silent* admiration wins relief.
 Too long abashed thy Name is like a rose
 That doth " within itself its sweetness close ;"
 A drooping daisy changed into a cup
 In which her bright-eyed beauty is shut up.
 Within these groves, where still are flitting by
 Shades of the Past, oft noticed with a sigh,
 Shall stand a votive Tablet, haply free,
 When towers and temples fall, to speak of Thee ;
 If sculptured emblems of our mortal doom
 Recall not there the wisdom of the Tomb.
 Green ivy fescen from out the cheerful earth,
 Will fringe the lettered stone ; and herbs
 Spring forth,
 Whose fragrance, by soft dews and rain unbound,
 Shall penetrate the heart without a wound ;
 While truth and love their purposes fulfil,
 Commemorating genius, talent, skill,
 That could not lie concealed where Thou wert known ;
 Thy virtues *He* must judge, and He alone,
 The God upon whose mercy they are thrown.

Nov. 1830.

XIV

WRITTEN AFTER THE DEATH OF CHARLES LAMB

To a good Man of most dear memory
 This Stone is sacred. Here he lies apart
 From the great city where he first drew breath.
 Was reared and taught ; and humbly earned his bread,
 To the strict labours of the merchant's desk
 By duty chained. Not seldom did those tasks
 Tease, and the thought of time so spent depress
 His spirit, but the recompense was high ;
 Firm Independence, Bounty's rightful sire ;
 Affections, warm as sunshine, free as air ;
 And when the precious hours of leisure came,
 Knowledge and wisdom, gained from converse sweet
 With books, or while he ranged the crowded streets
 With a keen eye, and overflowing heart :
 So genius triumphed over seeming wrong,
 And poured out truth in works of thoughtful love

Inspired—works potent over smiles and tears.

And as round mountain-tops the lightning plays,

Thus innocently sported, breaking forth
As from a cloud of some grave sympathy,
Humour and wild instinctive wit, and all
The vivid flashes of his spoken words.

From the most gentle creature, nursed in fields

Had been derived the name, he bore—a name;

Wherever christian altars have been raised,

Hallowed to meekness and to innocence ;
And if in him meekness at times gave way,

Provoked out of herself by troubles strange,

Many, and strange, that hung about his life ;

Still, at the centre of his being, lodged
A soul by resignation sanctified :

And if too often, self-reproached, he felt
That innocence belongs not to our kind,

A power that never ceased to abide in him,
Charity, and the multitude of sins

That he can cover, left not his exposed
To an unforgiving judgment from just Heaven.

O, he was good, if e'er a good Man lived !

From a reflecting mind and sorrowing heart

Those simple lines flowed with an earnest wish,

Though but a doubting hope, that they might serve

Fitly to guard the precious dust of him
Whose virtues called them forth. That aim is missed ;

For much that truth most urgently required

Had from a faltering pen been asked in vain :

Yet, haply, on the printed page received,
The imperfect record, there, may stand unblamed

As long as verse of mine shall breathe the air

Of memory, or see the light of love.

Thou wert a scorner of the fields, my Friend,

But more in show than truth ; and from the fields,

And from the mountains, to thy rural grave

Transported, my soothed spirit hovers o'er

Its green untrodden turf, and blowing flowers ;

And taking up a voice shall speak (tho' still

Awed by the theme's peculiar sanctity
Which words less free presumed not even to touch)

Of that fraternal love, whose heaven-lit lamp

From infancy, through manhood, to the last

Of threescore years, and to thy latest hour,

Burnt on with ever-strengthening light, enshrined

Within thy bosom.

" Wonderful " hath been
The love established between man and man,

" Passing the love of women ; " and between

Man and his help-mate in fast wedlock joined

Through God, is raised a spirit and soul of love

Without whose blissful influence Paradise

Had been no Paradise : and earth were now

A waste where creatures bearing human form,

Direst of savage beasts, would roam in fear,

Joyless and comfortless. Our days glide on ;

And let him grieve who cannot choose but grieve

That he hath been an Elm without his Vine,

And her bright dower of clustering charities,

That, round his trunk and branches, might have clung

Enriching and adorning. Unto thee, Not so enriched, not so adorned, to thee

Was given (say rather thou of later birth
Wert given to her) a Sister—'tis a word

Timidly uttered, for she *lives*, the meek,
The self-restraining, and the ever-kind ;

In whom thy reason and intelligent heart
Found—for all interests, hopes and tender cares,

All softening, humanising, hallowing powers,

Whether withheld, or for her sake unsought—

More than sufficient recompense !

Her love
(What weakness prompts the voice to tell it here ?)

Was as the love of mothers ; and when years,

Lifting the boy to man's estate, had called

The long-protected to assume the part
Of a protector, the first filial tie
Was undissolved ; and, in or out of sight,
Remained imperishably interwoven
With life itself. Thus, 'mid a shifting
world,

Did they together testify of time
And season's difference—a double tree
With two collateral stems spring from
one root :

Such were they—such thro' life they
might have been

In union, in partition only such ;
Otherwise wrought the will of the Most
High ;

Yet, thro' all visitations and all trials,
Still they were faithful : like two vessels
launched

From the same beach one ocean to ex-
plore

With mutual help, and sailing--to their
league

True, as inexorable winds, or bars
Floating or fixed of polar ice, allow.

But turn we rather, let my spirit turn
With thine, O silent and invisible Friend !
To those dear intervals, nor rare nor brief,
When reunited, and by choice withdrawn
From miscellaneous converse, ye were
taught

That the remembrance of foregone dis-
tress,

And the worse fear of future ill (which oft
Doth hang around it, as a sickly child
Upon its mother) may be both alike
Disarmed of power to unsettle present
good

So prized, and things inward and outward
held

In such an even balance, that the heart
Acknowledges God's grace, his mercy
feels,

And in its depth of gratitude is still.

O gift divine of quiet sequestration !
The hermit, exercised in prayer and
praise,

And feeding daily on the hope of heaven,
Is happy in his vow, and fondly cleaves

Was to your souls, and, to the thoughts
of others,
A thousand times more beautiful ap-
peared,

Your dual loneliness. The sacred tie
Is broken ; yet why grieve ? for Time

but holds
His moiety in trust, till Joy shall lead
To the blest world where parting is un-
known.

XV

EXTEMPORE EFFUSION UPON THE
DEATH OF JAMES FOGG

When first, descending from the moor-
lands,

I saw the Stream of Yarrow glide
Along a bare and open valley,
The Ettrick Shepherd was my guide.

When last along its banks I wandered,
Through groves that had begun to shed
Their golden leaves upon the pathways,
My steps the Border-minstrel led.

The mighty Minstrel breathes no longer,
Mid mouldering ruins low he lies ;
And death upon the braes of Yarrow,
Has closed the Shepherd-poet's eyes :

Nor has the rolling year twice measured,
From sign to sign, its steadfast course,
Since every mortal power of Coleridge
Was frozen at its marvellous source ;

The rapt One, of the Godlike forehead,
The heaven-eyed creature sleeps in earth :
And Lamb, the frolic and the gentle,
Has vanished from his lonely hearth.

Like clouds that rake the mountain-
summits,

Or waves that own no curbing hand,
How fast has brother followed brother,
From sunshine to the sunless land !

Yet I, whose lids from infant slumber
Were earlier raised, remain to hear
A timid voice, that asks in whispers,
" Who next will drop and disappear ? "

Our haughty life is crowned with dark-
ness,

Like London with its own black wreath,
On which with thee, O Crabbe ! forth-
looking,

I gazed from Hampstead's breezy heath.

As if but yesterday departed,
Thou too art gone before ; but why,
O'er ripe fruit, seasonably gathered,
Should frail survivors heave a sigh ?

Mourn rather for that holy Spirit,
Sweet as the spring, as ocean deep ;
For Her who, ere her summer faded,
Has sunk into a breathless sleep.

No more of old romantic sorrows,
For slaughtered Youth or love-lorn
Maid !

With sharper grief is Yarrow smitten,
And Ettrick mourns with her their Poet
dead.¹

Nov. 1835.

¹ See Note.

1835.

XVI INSCRIPTION

FOR A MONUMENT IN CROSTHWAITHE
CHURCH, IN THE VALE OF KESWICK

YE vales and hills whose beauty hitherto
drew
The poet's steps, and fixed him here, on
you,

His eyes have closed ! And ye, lov'd
no more

Shall Southey feed upon your precious
lore,

Works that ne'er shall forget their re-
nown.

Adding immortal labours of his own--
Whether he traced historic truth, with
scal

For the State's guidance, or the Church's
weal,

Or Fancy, disciplined by studious art,
Inform'd his pen, or wisdom of the heart,
Or judgments sanctioned in the Patriot's
mind [kind.

By reverence for the rights of all man-
Wide were his aims, yet in no human
breast

Could private feelings meet for holier rest.
His joys, his griefs, have vanished like a
cloud

From Skiddaw's top ; but he to heaven
was vowed

Through his industrious life, and Chris-
tian faith

Calm'd in his soul the fear of change and
death.

ODE

INTIMATIONS OF IMMORTALITY FROM RECOLLECTIONS OF EARLY CHILDHOOD

The Child is Father of the Man ;
And I could wish my days to be
Bound each to each by natural piety.

See page 651

I
THERE was a time when meadow, grove
and stream,

The earth, and every common sight,
To me did seem

Apparelled in celestial light,
The glory and the freshness of a dream.
It is not now as it hath been of yore ;—

Turn whereso'er I may,

By night or day,

The things which I have seen I now can
see no more.

II

The Rainbow comes and goes,

And lovely is the Rose,

The Moon doth with delight

Look round her when the heavens are
bare,

Waters on a starry night

Are beautiful and fair ;

The sunshine is a glorious birth ;

But yet I know, where'er I go,

That there hath past away a glory from
the earth.

III

Now, while the birds thus sing a joyous
song,

And while the young lambs bound

As to the tabor's sound,

Turn alone there came a thought of
grief :

A timely utterance gave that thought
relief,

And I again am strong :

The cataracts blow their trumpets from
the steep ;

No more shall grief of mine the season
wrong ;

I hear the Echoes through the moun-
tains throng,

The Winds come to me from the fields of
sleep,

And all the earth is gay ;

Land and sea

Give themselves up to jollity,

And with the heart of May

Doth every Beast keep holiday :—

Thou Child of Joy,

Shout round me, let me hear thy shouts,
thou happy

Shepherd-boy !

IV

Ye blessed Creatures, I have heard the
call

Ye to each other make ; I see

The heavens laugh with you in your
jubilee ;

My heart is at your festival,

My head hath its coronal,

The fulness of your bliss, I feel—I feel it
all.

Oh evil day ! if I were sullen

While Earth herself is adorning,

This sweet May-morning,

And the Children are culling,
 On every side,
 In a thousand valleys far and wide,
 Fresh flowers; while the sun shines
 warm,
 And the Babe leaps up on his Mother's
 arm:—
 I hear, I hear, with joy I hear!
 —But there's a Tree, of many, one,
 A single Field which I have looked upon,
 Both of them speak of something that is
 gone:
 The Pansy at my feet
 Doth the same tale repeat:
 Whither is fled the visionary gleam?
 Where is it now, the glory and the
 dream?

v

Our birth is but a sleep and a forgetting:
 The Soul that rises with us, our life's
 Star,
 Hath had elsewhere its setting,
 And cometh from afar:
 Not in entire forgetfulness,
 And not in utter nakedness,
 But trailing clouds of glory do we come
 From God, who is our home:
 Heaven lies about us in our infancy!
 Shades of the prison-house begin to close
 Upon the growing Boy,
 But He beholds the light, and whence it
 flows,
 He sees it in his joy:
 The Youth, who daily farthest from the
 east
 Must travel, still is Nature's Priest,
 And by the vision splendid
 Is on his way attended;
 At length the Man perceives it die away,
 And fade into the light of common day.

vi

Earth fills her lap with pleasures of her
 own;
 Yearnings she hath in her own natural
 kind,
 And, even with something of a Mother's
 mind,
 And no unworthy aim,
 The homely Nurse doth all she can
 Foster-child, her Inmate
 Man,
 Forget the glories he hath known,
 And that imperial palace whence he
 came.

vii

Behold the Child among his new-born
 blisses,
 A six years' Darling of a pigmy size!
 See, where 'mid work of his own hand he
 lies,

Fretted by sallies of his mother's kisses,
 With light upon him from his father's
 eyes!

See, at his feet, some little plan or chart,
 Some fragment from his dream of human
 life,
 Shaped by himself with newly-learned
 art;

A wedding or a festival,
 A mourning or a funeral;

And this hath now his heart,
 And unto this he frames his song:

Then will he fit his tongue

To dialogue of business, love, or strife;
 But it will not be long

Ere this be thrown aside,

And with new joy and pride

The little Actor con: another part;

Willing from time to time his "humorous
 stage"

With all the Persons, down to palsied
 Age,

That Life brings with her in her equipage;

As if his whole vocation

Were endless imitation.

viii

Thou, whose exterior semblance doth
 belie

Thy Soul's immensity

Thou best Philosopher, who yet dost
 keep

Thy heritage, thou Eye among the blind,
 That, deaf and silent, read'st the eternal
 deep,

Haunted for ever by the eternal mind,—
 Mighty Prophet! Seer blest!

On whom those truths do rest,

Which we are toiling all our lives to find,
 In darkness lost, the darkness of the
 grave;

Thou, over whom thy Immortality
 Broods like the Day, a Master o'er a
 Slave,

A Presence which is not to be put by;
 Thou little Child, yet glorious in the
 night

Of heaven-born freedom on thy being's
 height,

Why with such earnest pains dost thou
 provoke

The years to bring the inevitable yoke,
 Thus blindly with thy blessedness at
 strife?

Full soon thy Soul shall have her earthly
 And custom lie upon thee with a weight,
 Heavy as frost, and deep almost as life!

ix

O joy! that in our embers
 Is something that doth live,
 That nature yet remembers,
 What was so fugitive!

The thought of our past years in me doth
breed

Perpetual benediction : not indeed
For that which is most worthy to be
blest ;

Delight and liberty, the simple creed
Of Childhood, whether busy or at rest,
With new-fledged hope still fluttering in
his breast :—

Not for these I raise
The song of thanks and praise :
But for those obstinate questionings
Of sense and outward things,

Fallings from us vanishings :
Blank misgivings of a Creature
Moving about in worlds not realised,
High instincts before which our mortal
Nature

Did tremble like a guilty Thing surprised :
But for those first affections,
Those shadowy recollections,

Which, be they what they may,
Are yet the fountain light of all our day,
Are yet a master light of all our seeing ;

Uphold us, cherish, and have power to
make

Our noisy years seem moments in the
being

Of the eternal Silence : truths that wake,
To perish never :

Which neither listlessness, nor mad en-
deavour,

Nor Man nor Boy,
Nor all that is at enmity with joy,
Can utterly abolish or destroy !

Hence in a season of calm weather
Though inland far we be,

Our Souls have sight of that immortal sea
Which brought us hither,

Can in a moment travel thither,
And see the Children sport upon the shore,
And hear the mighty waters rolling ever-
more.

x

Then sing, ye Birds, sing, sing a joyous
song !

And let the young Lambs bound
As to the tabor's sound !

We in thought will join your throng,
Ye that pipe and ye that play,

Ye that through your hearts to-
day

Feel the gladness of the May !

What though the radiance which was
once so bright

Be now for ever taken from my sight,
Though nothing can bring back the
hour

Of splendour in the grass, of glory in the
flower ;

We will grieve not, rather find
Strength in what remains behind ;

In the primal sympathy
Which having been must ever be ;

In the soothing thoughts that
spring

Out of human suffering ;
In the faith that looks through
death,

In years that bring the philosophic mind.

XI

And O, ye Fountains, Meadows, Hills,
and Groves,

Forebode not any severing of our loves !
Yet in my heart of hearts I feel your
might ;

I only have relinquished one delight
To live beneath your more habitual sway.

I love the Brooks which down their chan-
nels fret,

Even more than when I tripped lightly as
they ;

The innocent brightness of a new-born
Day

Is lovely yet ;

The Clouds that gather round the setting
sun

Do take a sober colouring from an eye
That hath kept watch o'er man's mor-
tality ;

Another race hath been, and other palms
are won.

Thanks to the human heart by which we
live,

Thanks to its tenderness, its joys, and
fears,

To me the meanest flower that blows can
give

Thoughts that do often lie too deep for
tears.

مرحبا بكم في عالمنا

THE PRELUDE,
OR GROWTH OF A POET'S MIND;
AN AUTOBIOGRAPHICAL POEM.
ADVERTISEMENT.

THE following Poem was commenced in the beginning of the year 1799, and completed in the summer of 1805.

The design and occasion of the work are described by the Author in his Preface to the *Excursion*, first published in 1814, where he thus speaks:—

"Several years ago, when the Author retired to his native mountains with the hope of being enabled to construct a literary work that might live, it was a reasonable thing that he should take a review of his own mind, and examine how far Nature and Education had qualified him for such an employment.

"As subsidiary to this preparation, he undertook to record, in verse, the origin and progress of his own powers, as far as he was acquainted with them.

"That work, addressed to a dear friend, most distinguished for his knowledge and genius, and to whom the Author's intellect is deeply indebted, has been long finished; and the result of the investigation which gave rise to it, was a determination to compose a philosophical Poem, containing views of Man, Nature and Society, and to be entitled the '*Recluse*;' as having for its principal subject the sensations and opinions of a poet living in retirement.

"The preparatory poem is biographical, and conducts the history of the Author's mind to the point when he was emboldened to hope that his faculties were sufficiently matured for entering upon the arduous labour which he had proposed to himself; and the two works have the same kind of relation to each other, if he may so express himself, as the Ante-chapel has to the body of a Gothic church. Continuing this allusion, he may be permitted to add, that his minor pieces, which have been long before the public, when they shall be properly arranged, will be found by the attentive reader to have

such connection with the main work as may give them claim to be likened to the little cells, oratories, and sepulchral recesses, ordinarily included in those edifices."

Such was the Author's language in the year 1814.

It will thence be seen, that the present Poem was intended to be introductory to the *Recluse*, and that the *Recluse*, if completed, would have consisted of Three Parts. Of these, the Second Part alone, viz., the *Excursion*, was finished, and given to the world by the Author.

The First Book of the First Part of the *Recluse* still remains in manuscript; but the Third Part was only planned. The materials of which it would have been formed have, however, been incorporated, for the most part, in the Author's other Publications, written subsequently to the *Excursion*.

The Friend, to whom the present Poem is addressed, was the late SAMUEL TAYLOR COLERIDGE, who was resident in Malta, for the restoration of his health, when the greater part of it was composed.

Mr. Coleridge read a considerable portion of the Poem while he was abroad; and his feelings, on hearing it recited by the Author (after his return to his own country), are recorded in his Verses, addressed to Mr. Wordsworth, which will be found in the "*Sibylline Leaves*," p. 197, ed. 1817, or "*Poetical Works*, by S. T. Coleridge," vol. i., p. 206.—Ed.

RYDAL MOUNT,

July 13th, 1850.

BOOK FIRST

INTRODUCTION.—CHILDHOOD AND SCHOOL-TIME.

O THERE is blessing in this gentle breeze,
A visitant that while it fans my cheek
Doth seem half-conscious of the joy it
 brings
From the green fields, and from yon azure
 sky.
Whate'er its mission, the soft breeze can
 come
To none more grateful than to me:
 escaped

From the vast city, where I long had
 pined
A discontented sojourner: now free,
Free as a bird to settle where I will.
What dwelling shall receive me? in what
 vale
Shall be my harbour? underneath what
 grove
Shall I take up my home? and what clear
 stream
Shall with its murmur lull me into rest?
The earth is all before me. With a heart
Joyous, nor scared at its own liberty,

I look about; and should the chosen
guide

Be nothing better, than a wandering cloud,
I cannot miss my way. I breathe again!
Trances of thought and mountings of the
mind

Come fast upon me: it is shaken off,
That burthen of my own unnatural self.
The heavy weight of many a weary day
Not mine, and such as were not made for
me.

Long months of peace (if such bold word
accord

With any promises of human life.)

Long months of ease and undisturbed
delight

Are mine in prospect: whither shall I
turn.

By road or pathway, or through track-
less field,

Up hill or down, or shall some floating
thing

Upon the river point me out my course?

Dear Liberty! Yet what would it
avail

But for a gift that consecrates the joy?
For I, methought, while the sweet breath
of heaven

Was blowing on my body, felt within
A correspondent breeze, that gently
moved

With quickening virtue, but is now be-
come

A tempest, a redundant energy.

Vexing its own creation. Thanks to
both.

And their congenial powers, that, while
they join

In breaking up a long-continued frost,
Bring with them vernal promises, the
hope

Of active days urged on by flying hours—
Days of sweet leisure, taxed with patient
thought

Abstruse, nor wanting punctual service
high,

Matins and vespers of harmonious verse!

Thus far, O Friend! did I, not used to
make

A present joy the matter of a song,
Pour forth that day my soul in measured
strains

That would not be forgotten, and are here
Recorded: to the open fields I told

A prophecy: poetic numbers came
Spontaneously to clothe in priestly robe

A renovated spirit singled out,
Such hope was mine, for holy services.

My own voice cheered me, and, far more,
the mind's

Internal echo of the imperfect sound;

To both I listened, drawing from them
both

A cheerful confidence in things to come.

Content and not unwilling now to give
A respite to this passion, I paced on

With brisk and eager steps; and came, at
length,

To a green shady place, where down I sat
Beneath a tree, slackening my thoughts

by choice,
And settling into gentler happiness.

'Twas autumn, and a clear and placid
day,

With warmth, as much as needed, from
a sun

Two hours declined towards the west; a
day

With silver clouds, and sunshine on the
grass,

And in the sheltered and the sheltering
grove

A perfect stillness. Mute were the
thoughts

Encouraged and dismissed, till choice
was made

Of a known Vale, whither my feet should
turn.

Nor rest till they had reached the very
door

Of the one cottage which methought I
saw.

No picture of mere memory ever looked
So fair; and while upon the fancied scene

I gazed with growing love, a higher power
Than Fancy gave assurance of some work

Of glory there forthwith to be begun,
Perhaps too there performed. Thus
long I mused,

Nor e'er lost sight of what I mused upon,
Save when, amid the stately grove of

oaks, [cup

Now here, now there, an acorn, from its
Dislodged, through sere leaves rustled, or

at once

To the bare earth dropped with a start-
ling sound.

From that soft couch I rose not, till the
sun

Had almost touched the horizon; casting
then

A backward glance upon the curling
cloud

Of city smoke, by distance ruralised;
Keen as a Truant or a Fugitive,

But as a Pilgrim resolute, I took,
Even with the chance equipment of that

hour,
The road that pointed toward the chosen
Vale.

It was a splendid evening, and my soul
Once more made trial of her strength,

nor lacked

Æolian visitations ; but the harp
Was soon defrauded, and the banded host
Of harmony dispersed in straggling
sounds,

And lastly utter silence ! " Be it so ;
Why think of anything but present
good ? "

So, like a home-bound labourer I pursued
My way beneath the mellowing sun, that
shed

Mild influence ; nor left in me one wish
Again to bend the Sabbath of that time
To a servile yoke. What need of many
words ?

A pleasant loitering journey, through
three days

Continued, brought me to my hermitage.
I spare to tell of what ensued, the life
In common things—the endless store of
things.

Rare, or at least so seeming, every-day
Found all about me in one neighbour-
hood—

The self-congratulation, and, from morn
To night, unbroken cheerfulness serene.
But speedily an earnest longing rose
To brace myself to some determined aim,
Reading or thinking ; either to lay up
New stores, or rescue from decay the old
By timely interference : and therewith
Came hopes still higher, that with out-
ward life

I might endue some airy phantasies
That had been floating loose about for
years,

And to such beings temperately deal forth
The many feelings that oppressed my
heart.

That hope hath been discouraged ; wel-
come light

Dawns from the east, but dawns to dis-
appear

And mock me with a sky that ripens not
Into a steady morning : it my mind,
Remembering the bold promise of the
past,

Would gladly grapple with some noble
theme.

Vain is her wish : where'er she turns she
finds
finds from day to day renewed.

And now it would content me to yield
up

Those lofty hopes awhile, for present gifts
Of humbler industry. But, oh, dear
Friend !

The Poet, gentle creature as he is,
Hath, like the Lover, his unruly times ;
His fits when he is neither sick nor well,
Though no distress be near him but his
own

Unmanageable thoughts : his mind, best
pleased

While she as duteous as the mother dove
Sits brooding, lives not always to that
end.

But like the innocent bird, hath goadings
on
That drive her as in trouble through the
groves :

With me is now such passion, to be
blamed

No otherwise than as it lasts too long.

When, as becomes a man who would
prepare

For such an arduous work, I through
myself

Make rigorous inquisition, the report
Is often cheering ; for I neither see
To lack that first great gift, the vital soul,
Nor general Truths, which are themselves
a sort

Of Elements and Agents, Under-powers,
Subordinate helpers of the living mind :
Nor am I naked of external things.

Forins, images, nor numerous other aids
Of less regard, though wen perhaps with
toil

And needful to build up a Poet's praise.
Time, place, and manners do I seek, and
these

Are found in plenteous store, but nowhere
such

As may be singled out with steady choice,
No little band of yet remembered names,
Whom I, in perfect confidence, might
hope

To summon back from lonesome banish-
ment,

And make them dwellers in the hearts of
men

Now living, or to live in future years.
Sometimes the ambitious Power of
choice, mistaking

Proud spring-tide Swellings for a regular
sea,

Will settle on some British theme, some
old

Romantic tale by Milton left unsung ;
More often turning to some gentle place
Within the groves of Chivalry, I pipe
To shepherd swains, or seated harp in
hand,

Amid reposing knights by a river side
Or fountain, listen to the grave reports
Of dire enchantments faced and over-
come

By the strong mind, and tales of warlike
feats.

Where spear encountered spear, and
sword with sword

Fought, as if conscious of the blazonry
That the shield bore, so glorious was the
strife ;

Whence inspiration for a song that winds

Through ever changing scenes of votive
quest

Wrongs to redress, harmonious tribute
paid

To patient courage and unblemished
truth,

To firm devotion, zeal unquenchable,
And Christian meekness hallowing faith-
ful loves.

Sometimes, more sternly moved, I would
relate

How vanquished Mithridates northward
passed,

And, hidden in the cloud of years, became
Odin, the Father of a race by whom
Perished the Roman Empire: how the
friends

And followers of Sertorius, out of Spain
Flying, found shelter in the Fortunate
Isles,

And left their usages, their arts and laws,
To disappear by a slow gradual death.
To dwindle and to perish one by one.

Starved in those narrow bounds: but not
the soul

Of Liberty, which fifteen hundred years
Survived, and, when the European came
With skill and power that might not be
withstood,

Did, like a pestilence, maintain its hold
And wasted down by glorious death that

Of natural heroes: or I would record
How, in tyrannic times, some high-
souled man,

Unnamed among the chronicles of kings,
Suffered in silence for Truth's sake: or
tell,

How that one Frenchman,¹ through con-
tinued force

Of meditation on the inhuman deeds
Of those who conquered first the Indian
Isles,

Went single in his ministry across
The Ocean: not to comfort the oppressed,
But, like a thirsty wind, to roam about
Withering the Oppressor; how Gustavus
sought

Help at his need in Dalecarlia's mines:
How Wallace fought for Scotland; left
the name

Of Wallace to be found, like a wild flower,
All over his dear Country; left the deed.
Of Wallace, like a family of Ghosts,
To people the steep rocks and river
banks,

Her natural sanctuaries, with a local soul
Of independence and stern liberty.
Sometimes it suits me better to invent

A tale from my own heart, more near
akin

To my own passions and habitual
thoughts;

Some variegated story, in the main
Lofty, but the unsubstantial structure
feels

Before the very sun that brightens it,
Mist into air dissolving! Then a wish,
My last and favourite aspiration, mounts
With yearning towards some philosophic
song

Of Truth that cherishes our daily life;
With meditations passionate from deep
Recesses in man's heart, immortal verse
Thoughtfully fitted to the Orphean lyre:
But from this awful burthen I full soon
Take refuge and beguile myself with trust
That mellow years will bring a ripen-
ment

And clearer insight. Thus my days are
In contradiction: with no skill to part
Vague longing, haply bred by want of
power,

From paramount impulse not to be
withstood,

A timorous capacity from prudence,
From circumspection, infinite delay.
Humble and modest awe themselves

Betray me, serving often for a cloak
To a more subtle selfishness; that now
Locks every function up in blank reserve,
Now dupes me, trusting to an anxious eye,
That with intrusive restlessness beats off
Simplicity and self-presented truth.

Ah! better far than this, to stray about
Voluptuously through fields and rural
walks,

And ask no record of the hours, resigned
To vacant musing, unreprieved neglect
Of all things, and deliberate holiday.

Far better never to have heard the name
Of zeal and just ambition, than to live
Battled and plagued by a mind that every
hour

Turns recreant to her task; takes heart
again,

Then feels immediately some hollow
thought

Hang like an interdiction upon her hopes.

This is my lot; for clearer still I find
Some imperfection in the chosen theme,
Or see of absolute accomplishment

Much wanting, so much wanting, in my-
self,

That I recoil and droop, and seek repose
In listlessness from vain perplexity,

Unprofitably travelling toward the
grave,

Like a false steward who hath much
received

And renders nothing back.
Was it for this

¹ Dominique de Gourgues, a French gentleman who went in 1568 to Florida to avenge the massacre of the French by the Spaniards there.—Ed.

That one, the fairest of all rivers, loved
To blend his murmurs with my nurse's
song.

And, from his alder shades and rocky
falls,

And from his fords and shallows, sent a
voice

That flowed along my dreams! For
this, didst thou,

O Derwent! winding among grassy
holms

Where I was looking on, a babe in arms,
Make ceaseless music that composed my
thoughts

To more than infant softness, giving me
Amid the fretful dwellings of mankind

A foretaste, a dim earnest, of the calm
That Nature breathes among the hills
and groves.

When he had left the mountains and re-
ceived

On his smooth breast the shadow of
those towers

That yet survive, a shattered monument
Of feudal sway, the bright blue river
passed

Along the margin of our terrace walk:
A tempting playmate whom we dearly
loved.

Oh, many a time have I, a five years'
child,

In a small mill-race severed from his
stream,

Made one long bathing of a summer's
day;

Basked in the sun, and plunged and
basked again

Alternate, all a summer's day, or scoured
The sandy fields, leaping through flowery
groves

Of yellow ragwort; or when rock and
The woods, and distant Skiddaw's lofty
height,

Were bronzed with deepest radiance,
stood alone

Beneath the sky, as if I had been born
On Indian plains, and from my mother's
hut

Had run abroad in wantonness, to sport
A naked savage, in the thunder shower.

Fair seed-time had my soul, and I grew
up

Fostered alike by beauty and by fear—
Much favoured in my birth-place, and
no less

In that beloved Vale to which ere long
We were transplanted—there were we let
loose

For sports of wider range. Ere I had
told

Ten birth-days, when among the moun-
tain slopes

Frost, and the breath of frosty wind, had
snapped

The last autumnal crocus, 'twas my joy
With store of springes o'er my shoulder
hung

To fange the open heights where wood-
cocks run

Along the smooth green turf. Through
half the night,

Scudding away from snare to snare, I
plied

That anxious visitation;—moon and
stars

Were shining o'er my head. I was alone,
And seemed to be a trouble to the peace

That dwelt among them. Sometimes it
befel

In these night wanderings, that a strong
desire

O'erpowered my better reason, and the
bird

Which was the captive of another's toil
Became my prey, and when the deed
was done

I heard among the solitary hills
Low breathings coming after me, and
sounds

Of undistinguishable motion, steps
Almost as silent as the turf they trod.

Nor less when spring had warmed the
cultured Vale,

Moved we as plunderers where the
mother-bird

Had in high places built her lodge;
though mean

Our object and inglorious, yet the end
Was not ignoble. Oh! when I have hung
Above the raven's nest, by knots of grass
And half-inch fissures in the slippery
rock

But all sustained, and almost (so it
seemed)

Suspended by the blast that blew amain,
Shouldering the naked crag, oh, at that
time

While on the perilous ridge I hung alone,
With what strange utterance did the loud
dry wind

Blow through my ear! the sky seemed
not a sky

Of earth—and with what motion moved
the clouds!

Dust as we are, the immortal spirit
grows

Like harmony in music; there is a dark
Inscrutable workmanship that reconciles
Discordant elements, makes them cling
together

In one society. How strange that all
The terrors, pains, and early miseries,
Regrets, vexations, lassitudes interfused

Within my mind, should ever have borne
a part.

And that a needful part, in making up
The calm existence that is mine when I
Am worthy of myself! Praise to the
end!

Thanks to the means which Nature
deigned to employ;

Whether her fearless visitings, or those
That came with soft alarms like hurtless
light

Opening the peaceful clouds; or she may
use

Severer interventions, mine-try
More palpable, as best might suit her aim.

One summer evening (led by her) I
found

A little boat tied to a willow tree
Within a rocky cave, its usual home.

Straight, I unlocked her chain, and step-
ping in

Pushed from the shore. It was an act, of
stealth

And troubled pleasure, nor without the
voice

Of mountain-echoes did my boat move
on;

Leaving behind her still, on either side,
Small circles glittering idly in the moon,
Until they melted all into one track
Of sparkling light. But now, like one

who rows,
Proud of his skill, to reach a chosen point
With an unswerving line, I fixed my view
Upon the summit of a craggy ridge.

The horizon's utmost boundary; far
above

Was nothing but the stars and the grey
sky.

She was an elfin pinnace; lustily
I dipped my oars into the silent lake,

And, as I rose upon the stroke, my boat
Went heaving through the water like a

swan;

When, from behind that craggy steep
till then

The horizon's bound, a huge peak, black
and huge,

As if with voluntary power instinct
Upreared its head. I struck and struck

again,

And growing still in stature the grim
shape

Towered up between me and the stars,
and still,

For so it seemed, with purpose of its own
And measured motion like a living thing,
Strode after me. With trembling oars I

turned,

And through the silent water stole my
way

Back to the covert of the willow tree;

There in her mooring-place I left my
bark.

And through the meadows homeward
went, in grave

And serious mood; but after I had seen
That spectacle, for many days, my brain

Worked with a dim and undetermined
sense

Of unknown modes of being; o'er my
thoughts

There hung a darkness, call it solitude
Or blank desertion. No familiar shapes

Remained, no pleasant images of trees,
Of sea or sky, no colours of green fields;

But huge and mighty forms, that do not
five

Like living men, moved slowly through
the mind

By day, and were a trouble to my
dreams.

¹ Wisdom and Spirit of the universe!
Thou Soul that art the eternity of
thought,

That givest to forms and images a breath
And everlasting motion, not in vain

By day or star-light thus from my first
dawn

Of childhood didst thou intertwine for
me

The passions that build up our human
soul;

Not with the mean and vulgar works of
man,

But with high objects, with enduring
things—

With life and nature—purifying thus
The elements of feeling and of thought,

And sanctifying, by such discipline,
Both pain and fear, until we recognise

A grandeur in the beatings of the heart.
Nor was this fellowship vouchsafed to me

With stinted kindness. In November
days,

When vapours rolling down the valley
made

A lonely scene more lonesome, among
woods,

At noon and 'mid the calm of summer
nights,

When, by the margin of the reeking
lake,

Beneath the gloomy hills homeward I
went

In solitude, such intercourse was mine;
Mine was it in the fields both day and

night,

And by the waters, all the summer long.

And in the frosty season, when the sun
Was set, and visible for many a mile

¹ These lines have been printed before. See
p. 72.—Ed.

The cottage windows blazed through twilight, gloom.

I heeded not their summons : happy time
It was indeed for all of us—for me
It was a time of rapture ! Clear and
loud

The village clock tolled six,—I wheeled
about,

Proud and exulting like an untired horse
That cares not for his home. All shod
with steel,

We hissed along the polished ice in games
Confederate, imitative of the chase
And woodland pleasures,—the resound-
ing horn,

The pack loud chiming, and the hunted
hare.

So through the darkness and the cold we
flew,

And not a voice was idle : with the din
Snitten, the precipices rang aloud ;
The leafless trees and every icy crag
Tinkled like iron ; while far distant hills
Into the tumult sent an alien sound
Of melancholy not unnoticed, while the
stars

Eastward were sparkling clear, and in
the west

The orange sky of evening died away.
Not seldom from the uproar I retired
Into a silent bay, or sportively
Glanced sideways, leaving the tumultuous
thrang.

To cut across the reflex of a star
That fled, and, flying still before me,
gleamed

Upon the glassy plain ; and oftentimes
When we had given our bodies to the wind,
And all the shadowy banks on either side
Came sweeping through the darkness,
spinning still

The rapid line of motion, then at once
Have I, reclining back upon my heels,
Stopped short : yet still the solitary cliffs
Wheeled by me—even as if the earth had
rolled

With visible motion her diurnal round !
Behind me did they stretch in solemn
train,

Feebler and feebler, and I stood and
watched

Till all was tranquil as a dreamless sleep.

Ye Presences of Nature in the sky
And on the earth ! Ye Visions of the
hills !

And Souls of lonely places ! can I think
A vulgar hope was yours when ye em-
ployed

Such ministry, when ye through many a
year

Haunting me thus among my boyish
sports,

On caves and trees, upon the woods and
hills,

Impressed upon all forms the characters
Of danger or desire ; and thus did make
The surface of the universal earth—

With triumph and delight, with hope and
fear,

Work like a sea ?

Not uselessly employed,
Might I pursue this theme through every
change

Of exercise and play, to which the year
Did summon us in his delightful round.

We were a noisy crew ; the sun in
heaven

Beheld not vales more beautiful than
ours ;

Nor saw a band in happiness and joy
Richer, or worthier of the ground they
trod.

I could record with no reluctant voice
The woods of autumn, and their hazel
bowers

With milk-white clusters hung ; the rod
and line,

True symbol of hope's foolishness, whose
strong

And unproved enchantment led us on
By rocks and pools shut out from every
star.

All the green summer, to forlorn cascades
Among the windings hid of mountain
brooks.

—Unfading recollections ! at this hour
The heart is almost mine with which I
felt,

From some hill-top on sunny afternoons,
The paper kite high among fleecy clouds
Pull at her rein like an impetuous courser ;

Or, from the meadows sent on gusty
days,

Beheld her breast the wind, then suddenly
Dashed headlong, and rejected by the
storm.

Ye lowly cottages wherein we dwelt,
A ministration of your own was yours ;

Can I forget you, being as you were
So beautiful among the pleasant fields

In which ye stood ? or can I here forget
The plain and seemingly countenance
with which

Ye dealt out your plain comforts ? Yet
had ye

Delights and exultations of your own.
Eager and never weary we pursued

Our home amusements by the warm
peat-fire

At evening, when with pencil, and smooth
slate

In square divisions parcelled out and all
With crosses and with cyphers scribbled
o'er,

We schemed and puzzled, head opposed
to head
In strife too humble to be named in verse:
Or round the naked table, snow-white
deal,
Cherry or maple, sate in close array.
And to the combat, Loo or Whist, led on
A thick-ribbed army; not, as in the
world,
Neglected and ungratefully thrown by
Even for the very service they had
wrought.
But husbanded through many a long
campaign.
Uncouth assemblage was it, where no few
Had changed their functions; some,
plebeian cards
Which Fate, beyond the promise of their
birth,
Had dignified, and called to represent
The persons of departed potentates.
Oh, with what echoes on the board they
fell!
Ironic diamonds,—clubs, hearts, dia-
monds, spades,
A congregation piteously akin!
Cheap matter offered they to bovish wit,
Those sooty knives, precipitated down
With scoffs and taunts, like Vulcan out
of heaven:
The paramount ace, a moon in her eclipse,
Queens gleaming through their splen-
dour's last decay,
And monarchs surly at the wrongs sus-
tained
By royal visages. Meanwhile abroad
Incessant rain was falling, or the frost
Raged bitterly, with keen and silent
tooth:
And, interrupting oft that eager game,
From under Esthwaite's splitting fields
of ice
The pent-up air, struggling to free itself,
Gave out to meadow grounds and hills a
loud
Protracted yelling, like the noise of
wolves
Howling in troops along the Bothnic
Main.

Nor, sedulous as I have been to trace
How Nature by extrinsic passion first
Peopled the mind with forms sublime or
fair,
And made me love them, may I here
omit
How other pleasures have been mine, and
joys
Of subtler origin, how I have felt,
Not seldom even in that tempestuous
time,
Those hallowed and pure motions of the
sense

Which seem, in their simplicity, to own
An intellectual charm; that calm delight
Which, if I err not, surely must belong
To those first-born affinities that fit
Our new existence to existing things,
And, in our dawn of being, constitute
The bond of union between life and joy.

Yes, I remember when the changeful
earth,
And twice five summers on my mind have
stamped
The faces of the moving year, even then
I held unconscious intercourse with
beauty
Old as creation, drinking in a pure
Organic pleasure from the silver wreaths
Of curling mist, or from the level plain
Of waters coloured by impending clouds.

The sands of Westmoreland, the creeks
and bays
Of Cumbria's rocky limits, they can tell
How, when the Sea threw off his evening
shade,
And to the shepherd's hut on distant hills
Sent welcome notice of the rising moon,
How I have stood, to fancies such as these
A stranger, linking with the spectacle
No conscious memory of a kindred sight,
And bringing with me no peculiar sense
Of quietness or peace; yet have I stood,
Even while mine eye hath moved o'er
many a league
Of shining water, gathering as it seemed
Through every hair-breadth in that field
of light
New pleasure like a bee among the
flowers.

Thus oft amid those fits of vulgar joy
Which, through all seasons, on a child's
pursuits
Are prompt attendants, 'mid that giddy
bliss
Which, like a tempest, works along the
blood
And is forgotten: even then I felt
Gleams like the flashing of a shield:—
the earth
And common face of Nature spake to me
Rememberable things; sometimes, 'tis
true,
By chance collisions and quaint accidents
(Like those ill-sorted unions, work sup-
posed
Of evil-minded fairies,) yet not vain
Nor profitless, if haply they impressed
Collateral objects and appearances,
Albeit lifeless then, and doomed to sleep
Until maturer seasons called them forth
To impregnate and to elevate the mind.
—And if the vulgar joy by its own weight
Wearied itself out of the memory,

The scenes which were a witness of that joy
 Remained in their substantial lineaments
 Depicted on the brain, and to the eye
 Were visible, a daily sight : and thus
 By the impressive discipline of fear,
 By pleasure and repeated happiness,
 So frequently repeated, and by force
 Of obscure feelings representative
 Of things forgotten, these same scenes so
 bright,
 So beautiful, so majestic in themselves,
 Though yet the day was distant, did be-
 come
 Habitually dear, and all their forms
 And changeful colours by invisible links
 Were fastened to the affections.
 I began
 My story early—not misled, I trust,
 By an infirmity of love for days
 Disowned by memory—ere the breath of
 spring
 Planting my snowdrops among winter
 snows :
 Nor will it seem to thee, O Friend ! so
 prompt
 In sympathy, that I have lengthened out
 With fond and feeble tongue a tedious
 tale.
 Meanwhile, my hope has been, that I
 might fetch
 Invigorating thoughts from former years :
 Might fix the wavering balance of my
 mind,
 And haply meet reproaches too, whose
 power
 May spur me on, in manhood now mature

To honourable toil. Yet should these
 hopes
 Prove vain, and thus should neither I be
 taught
 To understand myself, nor thou to know
 With better knowledge how the heart was
 framed
 Of him thou lovest ; need I dread from
 thee
 'Harsh judgments,' if the song be loth to
 quit
 Those recollected hours that have the
 charm
 Of visionary 'things, those lovely forms'
 And sweet sensations that throw back
 our life,
 And almost make remotest infancy
 A visible scene, on which the sun is shin-
 ing ?
 One end at least hath been attained ;
 my mind
 Hath been revived, and if this genial mood
 Desert me not, forthwith shall be brought
 down
 Through later years the story of my life.
 The road lies plain before me ;—is a
 theme
 Single and of determined bounds ; and
 hence
 I choose it rather at this time, than work
 Of ampler or more varied argument,
 Where I might be discomfited and lost !
 And certain hopes are with me, that to
 thee
 This labour will be welcome, honoured
 Friend !

BOOK SECOND

SCHOOL-TIME

CONTINUED

Thus far, O Friend ! have we, though
 leaving much
 Unvisited, endeavoured to retrace
 The simple ways in which my childhood
 walked
 Those ~~chiefly~~ that first led me to the love
 Of rivers, woods, and fields. The passion
 yet
 Was in its birth, sustained as might befall
 By nourishment that came unsought :
 for still
 From week to week, from month to
 month, we lived
 A round of tumult. Duly were our games
 Prolonged in summer till the day-light
 failed :
 No chair remained before the doors ; the
 bench

And threshold steps were empty ; fast
 asleep
 The labourer, and the old man who had
 sate
 A later lingerer ; yet the revelry
 Continued and the loud uproar : at last,
 When all the ground was dark, and twink-
 ling stars
 Edged the black clouds, home and to bed
 we went,
 Feverish with weary joints and beating
 minds.
 Ah ! is there one who ever has been young,
 Nor needs a warning voice to tame the
 pride
 Of intellect and virtue's self-esteem ?
 One is there, though the wisest and the
 best
 Of all mankind, who covets not at times
 Union that cannot be ;—who would not
 give

If so he might, to duty and to truth
The eagerness of infantine desire ?
A tranquillising spirit presses now
On my corporeal frame, so wide appears
The vacancy between me and those days
Which yet have such self-presence in my
mind,

That, musing on them, often do I seem
Two consciousnesses, conscious of myself
And of some other Being. A rude mass
Of native rock, left midway in the square
Of our small market village, was the goal
Or centre of these sports; and when,
returned

After long absence, thither I repaired,
Gone was the old grey stone, and in its
place

A smart Assembly-room usurped the
ground

That had been ours. There let the fiddle
scream,

And be ye happy ! Yet, my Friends ' I
know

That more than one of you will think with
me

Of those soft starry nights, and that old
Dame

From whom the stone was named, who
there had sate,

And watched her table with its huckster's
wares

Assiduous, through the length of sixty
years.

We ran a boisterous course ; the year
spaw round

With giddy motion. But the time ap-
proached

That brought with it a regular desire
For calmer pleasures, when the winning
forms

Of Nature were collaterally attached
To every scheme of holiday delight

And every boyish sport, less grateful else
And languidly pursued.

When summer came,

Our pastime was, on bright half-holidays,
To sweep along the plain of Windermere

With rival oars ; and the selected bourn
Was now an Island musical with birds

That sang and ceased not ; now a Sister
Isle

Beneath the oak's umbrageous covert,
sown

With lilies of the Valley like a field ;
And now a third small Island, where sur-
vived

In solitude the ruins of a shrine
Once to Our Lady dedicate, and served

Daily with haunted rites. In such a race
So ended, disappointment could be none,

Uneasiness, or pain, or jealousy ;
We rested in the shade, all pleased alike,

Conquered and conqueror. Thus the
pride of strength,
And the vain-glory of superior skill,
Were tempered ; thus was gradually pro-
duced

A quiet independence of the heart ;
And to my Friend who knows me I may
add,

Fearless of blame, that hence for future
days

Ensued a diffidence and modesty,
And I was taught to feel, perhaps too
much,

The self-sufficing power of Solitude.

Our daily meals were frugal, Sabine
fare !

More than we wished we knew the bless-
ing then

Of vigorous hunger—hence corporeal
strength

Unsapped by delicate viands ; for, ex-
clude

A little weekly stipend, and we lived
Through three divisions of the quartered
year

In penniless poverty. But now to school
From the half-yearly holidays returned,

We came with weightier purses, that
sufficed

To furnish treats more costly than the
Dame

Of the old grey stone, from her scant
board, supplied.

Hence rustic dinners on the cool green
ground,

Or in the woods, or by a river side
Or shady fountains, while among the
leaves

Soft airs were stirring, and the mid-day
sun

Unfelt shone brightly round us in our joy.
Nor is my aim neglected if I tell

How sometimes, in the length of those
half-years,

We from our funds drew largely ;—proud
to curb,

And eager to spur on, the galloping steed ;
And with the courteous inn-keeper, whose
stud

Supplied our want, we happily might em-
ploy

Slv subterfuge, if the adventure's bound
Were distant : some famed temple where
of yore

The Druids worshipped, or the antique
walls

Of that large abbey, where within the
Vale

Of Nightshade, to St. Mary's honour built,
Stands yet a mouldering pile with frac-
tured arch,

Belfry, and images, and living trees ;

A holy scene!—Along the smooth green
turf
Our horses grazed. To more than inland
peace,
Left by the west wind sweeping overhead
From a tumultuous ocean, trees and
towers
In that sequestered valley may be seen,
—so silent and both motionless alike:
Such the deep shelter that is there, and
such
The safeguard for repose and quietness.

Our steeds remounted and the sum-
mons given,
With whip and spur we through the
chauntry flew
In uncouth race, and left the cross-legged
knight,
And the stone-abbot, and that single wren
Which one day sang so sweetly in the
nave
Of the old church, that—though from
recent showers
The earth was comfortless, and, touched
by faint
Internal breezes, sobbings of the place
And respirations, from the roofless walls
The shuddering ivy dripped large drops
—yet still
So sweetly 'mid the gloom the invisible
bird
Sang to herself, that there I could have
made
My dwelling-place, and lived for ever
there
To hear such music. Through the walls
we flew
And down the valley, and, a circuit made
In wantonness of heart, through rough
and smooth
We scurried homewards. Oh, ye rocks
and streams,
And that still spirit shed from evening air!
Even in this joyous time I sometimes
felt
Your presence, when with slackened step
we breathed
Along the sides of the steep hills, or when
Lighted by gleams of moonlight from the
sea
We beat with thundering hoofs the level
sand.

Midway on long Winander's eastern
shore,
Within the crescent of a pleasant bay,
A tavern stood; no homely-featured
house,
Primeval like its neighbouring cottages,
But 'twas a splendid place, the door beset
With chaises, grooms, and liveries, and
within

Decanters, glasses, and the blood-red
wine.
In ancient times, and ere the Hall was
built
On the large island, had this dwelling
been
More worthy of a poet's love, a hut,
Proud of its own bright fire and sycamore
shad
But—though the rhymes were gone, that
once inscribed
The threshold, and large golden charac-
ters,
Spread o'er the spangled sign-board, had
dislodged
The old Lien and usurped his place, in
slight
And mockery of the rustic painter's
hand—
Yet, to this hour, the spot to me is dear
With all its foolish pomp. The garden
lay
Upon a slope surmounted by a plain
Of a small bowling-green, beneath us
stood
A grove, with gleams of water through
the trees
And over the tree-tops: nor did we want
Refreshment, strawberries and mellow
cream.
There, while through half an afternoon
we played
On the smooth platform, whether skill
prevailed
Or happy blunder triumphed, bursts of
glee
Made all the mountains ring. But, ere
night-fall,
When in our pinnace we returned at
leisure
Over the shadowy lake, and to the beach
Of some small island steered our course
with one,
The Minstrel of the Troop, and left him
there, [flute]
And rowed off gently, while he blew his
Alone upon the rock—oh, then, the calm
And dead still water lay upon my mind
Even with a weight of pleasure, and the
sky,
Never before so beautiful, sank down
Into my heart, and held me like a dream!
Thus were my sympathies enlarged, and
thus
Daily the common range of visible things
Grew dear to me: already I began
To love the sun; a boy I loved the sun,
Not as I since have loved him, as a pledge
And surety of our earthly life, a light
Which we behold and feel we are alive;
Nor for his bounty to so many worlds.
But for this cause, that I had seen him
lay

His beauty on the morning hills, had seen
 The western mountain touch his setting
 orb,
 In many a thoughtless hour, when, from
 excess
 Of happiness, my blood appeared to flow
 For its own pleasure, and I breathed with
 joy.
 And, from like feelings, humble though
 intense,
 To patriotic and domestic love
 Analogous, the moon to me was dear :
 For I could dream away my purposes,
 Standing to gaze upon her while she hung
 Midway between the hills, as if she knew
 No other region, but belonged to thee,
 Yea, appertained by a peculiar right
 To thee and thy grey huts, thou one dear
 Vale !

Those incidental charms which first
 attached
 My heart to rural objects, day by day
 Grew weaker, and I hasten on to tell
 How Nature, intervenient till this time
 And secondary, now at length was sought
 For her own sake. But who shall parcel
 out
 His intellect by geometric rules,
 Split like a province into round and
 square ?
 Who knows the individual hour in which
 His habits were first sown, even as a
 seed ?
 Who that shall point as with a wand and
 say
 " This portion of the river of my mind
 Came from yon fountain ? " Thou, my
 Friend ! art one
 More deeply read in thy own thoughts ;
 to thee
 Science appears but what in truth she is,
 Not as our glory and our absolute boast,
 But as a succedaneum, and a prop
 To our infirmity. No officious slave
 Art thou of that false secondary power
 By which we multiply distinctions, then
 Dream that our puny boundaries are
 things
 That we perceive, and not that we have
 made.
 To thee, unblinded by these formal arts,
 The unity of all hath been revealed,
 And thou wilt doubt, with me less aptly
 skilled
 Than many are to range the faculties
 In scale and order, class the cabinet
 Of their sensations, and in voluble
 phrase
 Run through the history and birth of
 each
 As of a single independent thing.
 Hard task, vain hope, to analyse the mind,

If each most obvious and particular
 thought,
 Not in a mystical and idle sense,
 But in the words of Reason deeply
 weighed,
 Hath no beginning.
 Blest the infant Babe,
 (For with my best conjecture I would
 trace
 Our Being's earthly progress,) blest the
 Babe,
 Nursed in his Mother's arms, who sinks
 to sleep
 Rocked on his Mother's breast : who
 with his soul
 Drinks in the feelings of his Mother's eye !
 For him, in one dear Presence, there
 exists
 A virtue which irradiates and exalts
 Objects through widest intercourse of
 sense.
 No outcast he, bewildered and depressed :
 Along his infant veins are interfused
 The gravitation and the filial bond
 Of nature that connect him with the
 world.
 Is there a flower, to which he points with
 hand
 Too weak to gather it, already love
 Drawn from love's purest earthly fount
 for him
 Hath beautified that flower ; already
 shades
 Of pity cast from inward tenderness
 Do fall around him upon aught that
 bears
 Unsightly marks of violence or harm.
 Emphatically such a Being lives,
 Frail creature as he is, helpless as frail,
 An inmate of this active universe :
 For feeling has to him imparted power
 That through the growing faculties of
 sense
 Doth like an agent of the one great Mind
 Create, creator and receiver both,
 Working but in alliance with, the works
 Which it beholds.—Such, verily, is the
 first
 Poetic spirit of our human life,
 By uniform control of after years,
 In most, abated or suppressed ; in some,
 Through every change of growth and of
 decay,
 Pre-eminent till death.
 From early days,
 Beginning not long after that first time
 In which, a Babe, by intercourse of
 touch
 I held mute dialogues with my Mother's
 heart.
 I have endeavoured to display the means
 Whereby this infant sensibility,
 Great birthright of our being, was in me

Augmented and sustained. Yet is a path
More difficult before me ; and I fear
That in its broken windings we shall need
The chanois' sinews, and the eagle's wing :
For now a trouble came into my mind
From unknown causes. I was left alone
Seeking the visible world, nor knowing
why.

The props of my affections were removed,
And yet the building stood, as if sustained
By its own spirit ! All that I beheld
Was dear, and hence to finer influences
The mind lay open to a more exact
And close communion. Many are our
joys

In youth, but oh ! what happiness to live
When every hour brings palpable access
Of knowledge, when all knowledge is
delight.

And sorrow is not there ! The seasons
came,

And every season wheresoe'er I moved
Unfolded transitory qualities,
Which, but for this most watchful power
of love,

Had been neglected ; left a register
Of permanent relations, else unknown.
Hence life, and change, and beauty,
solitude

More active even than " best society " —
Society made sweet as solitude
By silent inobtrusive sympathies,
And gentle agitations of the mind
From manifold distinctions, difference
Perceived in things, where, to the un-
watchful eye,

No difference is, and hence, from the
same source,

Sublimar joy ; for I would walk alone,
Under the quiet stars, and at that time
Have felt whate'er there is of power in
sound

To breathe an elevated mood, by form
Or image unprofaned : and I would stand,
If the night blackened with a coming
storm,

Beneath some rock, listening to notes
that are

The ghostly language of the ancient earth.
Or make their dim abode in distant winds.
Thence ~~and~~ drink the visionary power ;
And deem not profitless those fleeting
moods

Of shadowy exultation : not for this, ⁶
That they are kindred to our purer mind
And intellectual life : but that the soul,
Remembering how she felt, but what she
felt

Remembering not, retains an obscure
sense

Of possible sublimity, whereto
With growing faculties she doth aspire,
With faculties still growing, feeling still

That whatsoever point they gain, they
yet
Have something to pursue.

And not alone,
Mid gloom and tumult, but no less mid
fair

And tranquil scenes, that universal power
And fitness in the latent qualities
And essences of things, by which the mind
Is moved with feelings of delight, to me
Came strengthened with a superadded
soul,

A virtue not its own. My morning walks
Were early : — out before the hours of
school

I travelled round our little lake, five miles
Of pleasant wandering. Happy time !
more dear

For this, that one was by my side, a
Friend,¹

Then passionately loved ; with heart how
full

Would he peruse these lines ! For many
years

Have since flowed in between us, and, our
minds

Both silent to each other, at that time
We live as if those hours had never been.
Nor seldom did I lift our cottage latch
Far earlier, ere one smoke-wreath had
risen

From human dwelling, or the verbal
thrush

Was audible ; and sate among the woods
Alone upon some jutting eminence,
At the first gleam of dawn-light, when the
Vale.

Yet slumbering, lay in utter solitude.
How shall I seek the origin ? where find
Faith in the marvellous things which then
I felt ?

Of in these moments such a holy calm
Would overspread my soul, that bodily
eyes

Were utterly forgotten, and what I saw
Appeared like something in myself, a
dream.

A prospect in the mind.

'Twere long to tell
What spring and autumn, what the win-
ter snows,

And what the summer shade, what day
and night,
Evening and morning, sleep and waking,
thought.

From sources inexhaustible, poured forth
To feed the spirit of religious love
In which I walked with Nature. But let
this

Be not forgotten, that I still retained
My first creative sensibility ;

¹ The late Rev. John Fleming, of Rayrigg,
Windermere. — Ed.

That by the regular action of the world
My soul was unsubdued, A plastic
power

Abode with me; a forming hand, at
times

Rebellious, acting in a devious mood;
A local spirit of his own, at war
With general tendency, but, for the most,
Subservient strictly to external things
With which it communed. An auxiliary
light

Came from my mind, which on the setting
sun

Bestowed new splendour; the melodious
birds,

The fluttering breezes, fountains that run
on

Murmuring so sweetly in themselves,
obeyed

A like dominion, and the midnight storm
Grew darker in the presence of my eye;
Hence my obeisance, my devotion hence,
And hence my transport.

Nor should this, perchance,
Pass unrecalled, that I still had loved

The exercise and produce of a toil,
Then analytic industry to me

More pleasing, and whose character I deem
Is more poetic as resembling more

Creative agency. The song would speak
Of that interminable building reared

By observation of affinities
In objects where no brotherhood exists

To passive minds. My seventeenth year
was come;

And, whether from this habit rooted now
So deeply in my mind, or from excess

In the great social principle of life
Coercing all things into sympathy,

To unorganic natures were transferred
My own enjoyments; or the power of

truth
Coming in revelation, did converse

With things that really are; I, at this
time.

Saw blessings spread around me like a
sea.

Thus while the days flew by, and years
passed on,

From Nature and her overflowing soul.
I had received so much, that all my

thoughts
Were steeped in feeling; I was only then,
Contented, when with bliss ineffable

I felt the sentiment of Being spread
O'er all that moves and all that seemeth

still;
O'er all that, lost, beyond the reach of

thought
And human knowledge, to the human eye
Invisible, yet liveth to the heart;

O'er all that leaps and runs, and shouts
and sings.

Or beats the gladsome air: o'er all that
glides.

Beneath the wave, yea, in the wave itself,
And mighty depth of waters. Wonder
not

If high the transport, great the joy I felt,
Communing in this sort through earth
and heaven

With every form of creature, as it looked
Towards the Uncreated with a counten-
ance

Of adoration, with an eye of love.
One song they sang, and it was audible,
Most audible, then, when the fleshly ear,
O'ercome by humblest prelude of that

strain.
Forgot her functions, and slept undis-
turbed.

If this be error, and another faith
Find easier access to the pious mind,
Yet were I grossly destitute of all
Those human sentiments that make this

earth
So dear, if I should fail with grateful
voice

To speak of you, ye mountains, and ye
lakes

And sounding cataracts, ye mists and
winds

That dwell among the hills where I was
born.

If in my youth I have been pure in heart,
If, mingling with the world, I am content
With my own modest pleasures, and have
lived

With God and Nature communing, re-
moved

From little enmities and low desires,
The gift is yours; if in these times of fear,
This melancholy waste of hopes o'er-
thrown,

If, 'mid indifference and apathy,
And wicked exultation when good men
On every side fall off, we know not how,
To selfishness, disguised in gentle names,
Of peace and quiet and domestic love,
Yet mingled not unwillingly with sneers
On visionary minds: if, in this time
Of dereliction and dismay, I yet
Despair not of our nature, but retain
A more than Roman confidence, a faith
That fails not, in all sorrow my support,
The blessing of my life; the gift is yours,
Ye winds and sounding cataracts! 'tis
yours,

Ye mountains! thine, O Nature! Thou
hast fed

My lofty speculations: and in thee,
For this uneasy heart of ours, I find
A never-failing principle of joy
And purest passion.

Thou, my Friend! wert reared
In the great city, 'mid far other scenes;

But we, by different roads, at length have
gained
The self same bourne. And for this cause
to thee
I speak, unapprehensive of contempt,
The insinuated scoff of coward tongues,
And all that silent language which so oft
In conversation between man and man
Blots from the human countenance all
trace
Of beauty and of love. For thou hast
sought
The truth in solitude, and, since the days

That gave thee liberty, full long desired,
To serve in Nature's temple, thou hast
been

The most assiduous of her ministers ;
In many things my brother, chiefly here
In this our deep devotion.

Fare thee well !

Health and the quiet of a healthful mind
Attend thee ! seeking oft the haunts of
men,

And yet more often living with thyself,
And for thyself, so haply shall thy days
Be many, and a blessing to mankind.

BOOK THIRD

RESIDENCE AT CAMBRIDGE

It was a dreary morning when the wheels
Rolled over a wide plain o'erhung with
clouds,
And nothing cheered our way till first we
saw
The long-roofed chapel of King's College
lift
Turrets and pinnacles in answering files,
Extended high above a dusky grove.

Advancing, we espied upon the road
A student clothed in gown and tasselled
cap,
Striding along as if o'ertasked by Time,
Or covetous of exercise and air ;
He passed—nor was I master of my eyes
Till he was left an arrow's flight behind.
As near and nearer to the spot we drew,
It seemed to suck us in with an eddy's
force.

Onward we drove beneath the Castle ;
caught,
While crossing Magdalene Bridge, a
glimpse of Cam :
And at the *Heop* alighted, famous Inn.

My spirit was up, my thoughts were
full of hope :
Some friends I had, acquaintances who
there
Seemed friends, poor simple school-boys,
now hung round
With honour and importance : in a
world
Of welcome faces up and down I roved ;
Questions, directions, warnings and
advice,
Flowed in upon me, from all sides ; fresh
day
Of pride and pleasure ! to myself I seemed
A man of business and expense, and went
From shop to shop about my own affairs,
To Tutor or to Tailor, as befel,
From street to street with loose and care-
less mind.

I was the Dreamer, they the Dream ;
I roamed

Delighted through the motley spectacle ;
Gowns grave, or gaudy, doctors, students,
streets,

Courts, cloisters, flocks of churches, gate-
ways, towers :

Migration, strange for a stripling of the
hills,

A northern villager.

As if the change
Had waited on some Fairy's wand, at
once

Behold me rich in monies, and attired
In splendid garb, with hose of silk, and
hair

Powdered like rimy trees, when frost is
keen.

My lordly dressing-gown, I pass it by,
With other signs of manhood that sup-
plied

The lack of beard.—The weeks went
roundly on,

With invitations, suppers, wine and
fruit,

Smooth housekeeping within, and all
without

Liberal, and suiting gentleman's array.

The Evangelist St. John my patron
was :

Three Gothic courts are his, and in the
first

Was my abiding-place, a nook obscure ;
Right underneath, the College kitchens
made

A humming sound, less tuneable than bees,
But hardly less industrious ; with shrill
notes

Of sharp command and scolding inter-
mixed.

Near me hung Trinity's loquacious clock,
Who never let the quarters, night or day,

Slip by him unproclaimed, and told the
hours

Twice over with a male and female voice.

Her pealing organ was my neighbour too ;
And from my pillow, looking forth by
light

Of moon or favouring stars, I could behold
The antechapel where the statue stood
Of Newton with his prism and silent face,
The marble index of a mind for ever
Voyaging through strange seas of
Thought, alone.

Of College labours, of the Lecturer's
room

All studded round, as thick as chairs
could stand,

With loyal students, faithful to their
books,

Half-and-half idlers, hardy recusants,
And honest dunces—of important days.

Examinations, when the man was weighed
As in a balance ! of excessive hopes,

Tremblings withal and commendable
fears,

Small jealousies, and triumphs good or
bad—

Let others that know more speak as they
know :

Such glory was but little sought by me,
And little won. Yet from the first crude
days

Of settling time in this untried abode,
I was disturbed at times by prudent

thoughts,
Wishing to hope without a hope, some
fears

About my future worldly maintenance,
And, more than all, a strangeness in the
mind.

A feeling that I was not for that hour,
Nor for that place. But therefore be
cast down ?

For (not to speak of Reason and her pure
Reflective acts to fix the moral law
Deep in the conscience, nor of Christian
Hope,

Bowing her head before her sister Faith
As one far mightier,) hither I had come.

Bear witness Truth, endowed with holy
powers

And faculties, whether to work or feel.
Oft when the dazzling show no longer new
Had ceased to dazzle, ofttimes did I quit
My comrades, leave the crowd, buildings
and groves,

And as I paced alone the level fields
Far from those lovely sights and sounds
sublime

With which I had been conversant, the
mind

Drooped not ; but there into herself
returning,

With prompt rebound seemed fresh as
heretofore.

At least I more distinctly recognised

W.P.

Her native instincts : let me dare to
speak

A higher language, say that now I felt
What independent solaces were mine,

To mitigate the injurious sway of place
Or circumstance, how far soever changed
In youth, or to be changed in after years.

As if awakened, summoned, roused, con-
strained,

I looked for universal things ; perused
The common countenance of earth and
sky :

Earth, nowhere unembellished by some
trace

Of that first Paradise whence man was
driven :

And sky, whose beauty and bounty are
expressed

By the proud name she bears—the name
of Heaven.

I called on both to teach me what they
might ;

Or turning the mind in upon herself
Pored, watched, expected, listened,

spread my thoughts
And spread them with a wider creeping ;

felt

Incumbencies more awful, visitings
Of the Upholder of the tranquil soul,

That tolerates the indignities of Time,
And, from the centre of Eternity

All finite motions overruling, lives
In glory immutable. But peace ! enough

Here to record that I was mounting now
To such community with highest truth—

A track pursuing, not untrod before,
From strict analogies by thought supplied
Or consciousnesses not to be subdued.

To every natural form, rock, fruit or
flower,

Even the loose stones that cover the high-
way,

I gave a moral life : I saw them feel,
Or linked them to some feeling : the
great mass

Lay bedded in a quickening soul, and all
That I beheld respired with inward
meaning.

Add that whate'er of Terror or of Love
Or Beauty, Nature's daily face put on
From transitory passion, unto time

I was as sensitive as waters are
To the sky's influence in a kindred mood

Of passion ; was obedient as a lute
That waits upon the touches of the wind.

Unknown, unthought of, yet I was most
rich—

I had a world about me—'twas my own ;
I made it, for it only lived to me,

And to the God who sees into the heart.
Such sympathies, though rarely, were
betrayed

By outward gestures and by visible looks :

Some called it madness—so indeed it was,
If child-like fruitfulness in passing joy,
If steady moods of thoughtfulness
matured

To inspiration, sort with such a name ;
If prophecy be madness ; if things viewed
By poets in old time, and higher up
By the first men, earth's first inhabitants,
May in these tutored days no more be
seen

With undisordered sight. But leaving
this,

It was no madness, for the bodily eye
Amid my strongest workings evermore
Was searching out the lines of difference
As they lie hid in all external forms,
Near or remote, minute or vast : an eye
Which, from a tree, a stone, a withered
leaf,

To the broad ocean and the azure heavens
Spangled with kindred multitudes of
stars,

Could find no surface where its power
might sleep :

Which spake perpetual logic to my soul,
And by an unrelenting agency

Did bind my feelings even as in a chain.

And here, O Friend ! have I retraced
my life

Up to an eminence, and told a tale
Of matters which not falsely may be
called

The glory of my youth. Of genius, power,
Creation and divinity itself

I have been speaking, for my theme has
been

What passed within me. Not of out-
ward things

Done visibly for other minds, words,
signs,

Symbols or actions, but of my own heart
Have I been speaking, and my youthful
mind.

O Heavens ! how awful is the might of
souls,

And what they do within themselves
while yet

The yoke of earth is new to them, the
world

Nothing but a wild field where they were
sown.

This is, in truth, heroic argument,
This genuine prowess, which I wished to
touch

With hand however weak, but in the
main

It lies far hidden from the reach of words.
Poets have we all of us within our souls
Where all stand single ; this I feel, and
make

Breathings for incommunicable powers ;
But is not each a memory to himself,

And, therefore, now that we must quit
thus them,

I am not heartless, for there's not a man
That lives who hath not known his god-
like hours.

And feels not what an empire we inherit
As natural beings in the strength of
Nature,

No more : for now into a populous plain
We must descend. A Traveller I am,
Whose tale is only of himself ; even so,

So be it, if the pure of heart be prompt
To follow, and if thou, my honoured

Friend !

Who in these thoughts art ever at my
side,

Support, as heretofore, my fainting steps.

It hath been told, that when the first
delight

That flashed upon me from this novel
show

Had failed, the mind returned into her-
self ;

Yet true it is, that I had made a change
In climate, and my nature's outward

coat

Changed also slowly and insensibly.

Full oft the quiet and exalted thoughts
Of loneliness gave way to empty noise

And superficial pastimes ; now and then
Forced labour, and more frequently

forced hopes ;

And, worst of all, a treasonable growth
Of indecisive judgments, that impaired

And shook the mind's simplicity.—And
yet

This was a gladsome time. Could I be-
hold—

Who, less insensible than sodden clay
In a sea-river's bed at ebb of tide,

Could have beheld,—with undelighted
heart,

So many happy youths, so wide and fair,
A congregation in its budding-time

Of health, and hope, and beauty, all at
once

So many divers samples from the growth
Of life's sweet season—could have seen

unmoved

That miscellaneous garland of wild flowers
Decking the matron temples of a place

so famous through the world ? To me,
at least,

It was a goodly prospect : for, in sooth,
Though I had learnt betimes to stand un-
propped,

And independent musings pleased me so
That spells seemed on me when I was
alone,

Yet could I only cleave to solitude
In lonely places ; if a throng was near

That way I leaned by nature ; for my heart
Was social, and loved idleness and joy.

Not seeking those who might partici-
pate

My deeper pleasures (nay, I had not once,
Though not unused to mutter lonesome
songs,

Even with myself divided, such delight,
Or took that way for aught that might
be clothed

In human language), easily I passed
From the remembrances of better things,
And slipped into the ordinary works
Of careless youth, unburthened, un-
alarmed.

Covers there were within my mind which
sun

Could never penetrate, yet did there not
Want store of leafy arbours where the
light

Might enter in at will. Companionships,
Friendships, acquaintances, were welcome

We sauntered, played, or noted ; we
talked

Unprofitable talk at morning hours :
Drifted about along the streets and walks,
Read lazily in trivial books, went forth
To gallop through the country in blind
zeal

Of senseless horsemanship, or on the
breast

Of Cam sailed boisterously, and let the
stars

Come forth, perhaps without one quiet
thought,

Such was the tenor of the second act
In this new life. Imagination slept,
And yet not utterly. I could not print
Ground where the grass had yielded to
the steps

Of generations of illustrious men,
Unmoved. I could not always lightly
pass

Through the same gateways, sleep where
they had slept,

Wake where they waked, range that in-
closure old,

That garden of great intellects, undis-
turbed.

Place also by the side of this dark sense,
Of noble feeling, that those spiritual men,
Even the great Newton's own ethereal
self,

Seemed humbled in these precincts thence
to be

The more endeared. Their several
memories here

Even like their persons in their portraits
clothed

With the accustomed garb of daily life)
Put on a lowly and a touching grace
Of more distinct humanity, that left
All genuine admiration unimpaired.

Beside the pleasant Mill of Tromping-
ton

I laughed with Chaucer in the hawthorn
shade ;

Heard him, while birds were warbling,
tell his tales

Of amorous passion. And that gentle
Bard,

Chosen by the Muses for their Page of
State—

Sweet Spenser, moving through his
clouded heaven

With the moon's beauty and the moon's
soft pace,

I called him Brother, Englishman, and
Friend !

Yea, our blind Poet, who in his later day,
Stood almost single ; uttering odious
truth—

[blind,
Darkness before, and danger's voice be-
Soul awful—if the earth has ever lodged

An awful soul—I seemed to see him here
Familiarly, and in his scholar's dress

Bounding before me, yet a stripling
youth—

A boy, no better, with his rosy cheeks
Angelic, keen eye, courageous look.

And conscious step of purit and pride.
Among the band of my compeers was one

Whom chance had stationed in the very
room

Honoured by Milton's name. O tem-
perate Bard !

Be it confessed that, for the first time, seated
Within thy innocent lodge and oratory,

One of a festive circle, I poured out
Libations, to thy memory drank, till pride

And gratitude grew dizzy in a brain
Never excited by the fumes of wine

Before that hour, or since. Then, forth
I ran

From the assembly ; through a length of
streets,

Ran, ostrich-like, to reach our chapel
door

In not a desperate or opprobrious time,
Albeit long after the importunate bell.

Had stopped, with wearisome Cassandra
voice

No longer haunting the dark winter night.
Call back, O Friend ! a moment to thy
mind,

The place itself and fashion of the rites.
With careless ostentation shouldering up

My surplice, through the inferior throng
I clove

Of the plain Burghers, who in audience
stood

On the last skirts of their permitted
ground,
Under the pealing organ. Empty
thoughts !
I am ashamed of them : and that great
Bard,
And thou, O Friend ! who in thy ample
mind
Hast placed me high above my best de-
serts,
Ye will forgive the weakness of that hour,
In some of its unworthy vanities,
Brother to many more.

In this mixed sort
The months passed on, remissly, not
given up

To wilful alienation from the right,
Or walks of open scandal, but in vague
And loose indifference, easy likings, aims
Of a low pitch—duty and zeal dismissed,
Yet Nature, or a happy course of things
Not doing in their stead the needful work.
The memory languidly revolved, the
heart

Reposed in noontide rest, the inner pulse
Of contemplation almost failed to beat.
Such life might not inaptly be compared
To a floating island, an amphibious spot
Unsound, of spongy texture, yet withal
Not wanting a fair face of water weeds
And pleasant flowers. The thirst of liv-
ing praise,

Fit reverence for the glorious Dead, the
sight

Of those long vistas, sacred catacombs,
Where mighty *minds* lie visibly entombed,
Have often stirred the heart of youth,
and bred

A fervent love of rigorous discipline.—
Alas ! such high emotion touched not me.
Look was there none within these walls
to shame

My easy spirits, and discountenance
Their light composure, far less to instil
A calm resolve of mind, firmly addressed
To puissant efforts. Nor was this the
blame

Of others but my own ; I should, in
truth,

As far as doth concern my single self,
Misdeem most widely, lodging it else-
where :

For I, bred up 'mid Nature's luxuries,
Was a spoiled child, and, rambling like
the wind,

As I had done in daily intercourse
With those crystalline rivers, solemn
heights,

And mountains, ranging like a fowl of the
air,

I was ill-tutored for captivity ;
To quit my pleasure, and, from month to
month,

Take up a station calmly on the perch
Of sedentary peace. Those lovely forms
Had also left less space within my mind,
Which, wrought upon instinctively, had
found

A freshness in those objects of her love,
A winning power, beyond all other power.
Not that I slighted books,—that were to
lack

All sense,—but other passions in me
ruled,

Passions more fervent, making me less
prompt

To in-door study than was wise or well,
Or suited to those years. Yet I, though
used

In magisterial liberty to rove,
Culling such flowers of learning as might
tempt

A random choice, could shadow forth a
place

(If now I yield not to a flattering dream)
Whose studious aspect should have bent
me down

To instantaneous service ; should at
once

Have made me pay to science and to arts
And written lore, acknowledged my liege
lord,

A homage frankly offered up, like that
Which I had paid to Nature. Toil and
pains

In this recess, by thoughtful Fancy built
Should spread from heart to heart ; and
stately groves,

Majestic edifices, should not want
A corresponding dignity within.

The congregating temper that pervades
Our unripe years, not wasted, should be
taught

To minister to works of high attempt—
Works which the enthusiast would per-
form with love.

Youth should be awed, religiously pos-
sessed

With a conviction of the power that waits
On knowledge, when sincerely sought and
prized

For its own sake, on glory and on praise
If but by labour won, and fit to endure
The passing day ; should learn to put
aside

Her trappings here, should strip them
off abashed

Before antiquity and steadfast truth
And strong book-min'dness ; and over
all

A healthy sound simplicity should reign,
A seemly plainness, name it what you
will,

Republican or pious.

If these thoughts
Are a gratuitous emblazonry

That mocks the recreant age *we* live in,
then

Be Folly and False-seeming free to affect
Whatever formal gait of discipline
Shall raise them highest in their own
esteem—

Let them parade among the Schools at
will,

But spare the House of God. Was ever
known

The witless shepherd who persists to
drive

A flock that thirsts not to a pool disliked?
A weight must surely hang on days begun
And ended with such mockery. Be wise,

Ye Presidents and Deans, and, till the
spirit

Of ancient times revive, and youth be
trained.

At home in pious service, to your bells
Give seasonable rest, for 'tis a sound

Hollow, as ever vexed the tranquil air ;
And your officious doings bring disgrace

On the plain steeples of our English
Church,

Whose worship, 'mid remotest village
trees,

Suffers for this. Even Science, too, at
hand

In daily sight of this irreverence,
Is smitten thence with an unnatural taint,

Loses her just authority, falls beneath
Collateral suspicion, else unknown.

This truth escaped me not, and I confess,
That having 'mid my native hills given
loose

To a schoolboy's vision, I had raised a
pile

Upon the basis of the coming time,
That fell in ruins round me. Oh, what
joy

To see a sanctuary for our country's
youth

Informed with such a spirit as might be
Its own protection ; a primeval grove,

Where, though the shades with cheerfulness
were filled,

Nor indigent of songs warbled from
crowds

In under-coverts, yet the countenance
Of the whole place should bear a stamp
of awe ;

A habitation sober and demure
For ruminating creatures ; a domain

For quiet things to wander in ; a haunt
In which the heron should delight to feed

By the shy rivers, and the pelican
Upon the cypress spire in lonely thought

Might sit and sun himself.—Alas ! Alas !
In vain for such solemnity I looked ;

Mine eyes were crossed by butterflies,
ears vexed

By chattering popinjays ; the inner heart

Seemed trivial, and the impresses without
Of a too gaudy region.

Different sight

Those venerable Doctors saw of old,
When all who dwelt within those famous
walls

Lied in abstemiousness a studious life ;
When, in forlorn and naked chambers

And crowded, o'er the ponderous books
they hung

Like caterpillars eating out their way
In silence, or with keen devouring noise

Not to be tracked or fathered. Princes
then

At matins froze, and couched at curfew-
time,

Trained up through piety and zeal to
prize

Spare diet, patient labour, and plain
weeds.

O seat of Arts ! renowned throughout the
world !

Far different service in those homely days
The Muses' modest nurslings underwent

From their first childhood : in that
glorious time

When Learning, like a stranger come
from far,

Sounding through Christian lands her
trumpet, roused

Peasant and king ; when boys and youths,
the growth

Of ragged villages and crazy huts,
Forsook their homes, and, errant in the
quest

Of Patron, famous school or friendly
nook,

Where, pensioned, they in shelter might
sit down,

From town to town and through wide
scattered realms

Journeyed with ponderous folios in their
hands ;

And often, starting from some covert
place,

Saluted the chance comer on the road,
Crying, "An obolus, a penny give

To a poor scholar !"—when illustrious
men,

Lovers of truth, by penury constrained,
Bucer, Erasmus, or Melancthon, read

Before the doors or windows of their cells
By moonshine through mere lack of taper

light.

But peace to vain regrets ! We see
but darkly

Even when we look behind us, and best
things

Are not so pure by nature that they needs
Must keep to all, as fondly all believe,

Their highest promise. If the mariner,

When at reluctant distance he hath
 passed
 Some tempting island, could but know
 the ill
 That must have fallen upon him had he
 brought
 His bark to land upon the wished-for
 shore,
 Good cause would oft be his to thank the
 surf
 Whose white belt scared him thence, or
 wind that blew
 Inexorably adverse : for myself
 I grieve not ; happy is the gownèd youth,
 Who only misses what I missed, who falls
 No lower than I fell.

I did not love,
 Judging not ill perhaps, the timid course
 Of our scholastic studies ; could have
 wished
 To see the river flow with ampler range
 And freer pace ; but more, far more, I
 grieved
 To see displayed among an eager few,
 Who in the field of contest persevered,
 Passions unworthy of youth's generous
 heart
 And mounting spirit, pitiously repaid,
 When so disturbed, whatever palms are
 won.
 From these I turned to travel with the
 shoal
 Of more unthinking natures, easy minds
 And pillow ; yet not wanting love that
 makes
 The day pass lightly on, when foresight
 sleeps,
 And wisdom and the pledges inter-
 changed
 With our own inner being are forgot.

Yet was this deep vacation not given
 up
 To utter waste. Hitherto I had stood
 In my own mind remote from social life,
 (At least from what we commonly so
 name,)
 Like a lone shepherd on a promontory
 Who lacking occupation looks far forth
 Into the boundless sea, and rather makes
 Than finds what he beholds. And sure
 it is,
 That this first transit from the smooth
 delights
 And wild outlandish walks of simple youth
 To something that resembles an approach
 Towards human business, to a privileged
 world
 Within a world, a midway residence
 With all its intervention imagery,
 Did better suit my visionary mind,
 Far better, than to have been bolted forth,
 Thrust out abruptly into Fortune's way

Among the conflicts of substantial life ;
 By a more just gradation did lead on
 To higher things ; more naturally
 matured,
 For permanent possession, better fruits,
 Whether of truth or virtue, to ensue.
 In serious mood, but oftener, I confess,
 With playful zest of fancy, did we note
 (How could we less ?) the manners and
 the ways

Of those who lived distinguished by the
 badge
 Of good or ill report ; or those with whom
 By frame of Academic discipline
 We were perforce connected, men whose
 sway

And known authority of office served
 To set our minds on edge, and did no
 more.

Nor wanted we rich pastime of this kind,
 Found everywhere, but chiefly in the ring
 Of the grave Elders, men unscoured,
 grotesque

In character, tricked out like aged trees
 Which through the lapse of their infirmity
 Give ready plate to any random seed
 That chooses to be reared upon their
 trunks.

Here on my view, confronting vividly
 Those shepherd swains whom I had lately
 left,

Appeared a different aspect of old age ;
 How different ! yet both distinctly
 marked,

Objects embossed to catch the general
 eye,

Or portraitures for special use designed,
 As some might seem, so aptly do they
 serve

To illustrate Nature's book of rudiments—
 That book upheld as with maternal care
 When she would enter on her tender
 scheme

Of teaching comprehension with delight,
 And mingling playful with pathetic
 thoughts.

The surfaces of artificial life
 And manners finely wrought, the delicate
 race

Of colours, lurking, gleaming up and
 down

Through that state arras woven with silk
 and gold ;

'Tis wily interchange of snaky hues,
 Willingly or unwillingly revealed,
 I neither knew nor cared for ; and as such
 Were wanting here, I took what might be
 found

Of less elaborate fabric. At this day
 I smile, in many a mountain solitude
 Conjuring up scenes as obsolete in freaks
 Of character, in points of wit as broad,

As taught by wooden images performed
 For entertainment of the gaping crowd
 At wake or fair. And oftentimes do flit
 Remembrances before me of old men—
 Their humourists, who have been long in
 their graves,
 And having almost in my mind put off
 Their human names, have into phantoms
 passed
 Of texture midway between life and

I play the loiterer: 'tis enough to note
 That here in dwarf proportions were
 expressed
 The limbs of the great world; its eager
 strifes
 Collaterally pourtrayed, as in mock
 fight,
 A tournament of blows, some hardly
 Though short of mortal combat; and
 whatever
 Might in this pageant be supposed to hit
 An artless rustic's notice, this way less.
 More that way, was not wasted upon
 me—
 And yet the spectacle may well demand
 A more substantial name, no mimic show,
 Itself a living part of a live whole,
 A creek in the vast sea; for, all degrees
 And shapes of spurious fame and short-
 lived praise
 Here sate in state, and fed with daily
 alms
 Retainers won away from solid good;
 And here was Labour, his own bond-
 slave; Hope,
 That never set the pains against the
 prize;
 Idleness halting with his weary clog,
 And poor misguided Shame, and witless
 Fear,
 And simple Pleasure foraging for Death;
 Honour misplaced, and Dignity astray;
 Feuds, factions, flatteries, enmity, and
 guile
 Murmuring submission, and bald govern-
 ment,

(The idol weak as the idolator.)
 And Decency and Custom starving
 Truth,
 And blind Authority beating with his
 staff
 The child that might have led him;
 Emptiness
 Followed as of good omen, and meek
 Worth
 Left to herself unheard of and unknown,

Of these and other kindred notices
 I cannot say what portion is in truth
 The naked recollection of that time.
 And what may rather have been called
 to life
 By after-meditation. But delight
 That, in an easy temper lulled asleep,
 Is still with Innocence its own reward,
 This was not wanting. Carelessly I
 roamed
 As through a wide museum from whose
 stores
 A casual rarity is singled out
 And has its brief perusal, then gives way
 To others, all supplanted in their turn;
 Till 'mid this crowded neighbourhood of
 things
 That are by nature most unneighbourly,
 The head turns round and cannot right
 itself;
 And though an aching and a barren
 sense
 Of gay confusion still be uppermost,
 With few wise longings and but little
 love,
 Yet to the memory something cleaves at
 last,
 Whence profit may be drawn in times to
 come.
 Thus in submissive idleness, my
 Friend!
 The labouring time of autumn, winter,
 spring,
 Eight months! rolled pleasingly away;
 the ninth
 Came and returned me to my native hills.

BOOK FOURTH

SUMMER VACATION

BRIGHT was the summer's noon when
 quickening steps
 Followed each other till a dreary moor
 Was crossed, a bare ridge clomb, upon
 whose top
 Standing alone, as from a rampart's edge,
 I overlooked the bed of Windermere,
 Like a vast river, stretching in the sun.
 With exultation, at my feet I saw

Lake, islands, promontories, gleaming
 bays,
 A universe of Nature's fairest forms
 Proudly revealed with instantaneous
 burst,
 Magnificent, and beautiful, and gay.
 I bounded down the hill shouting again
 For the old Ferryman; to the shout the
 rocks
 Replied, and when the Charon of the
 flood

Had staid his oars, and touched the
jutting pier,
I did not step into the well-known boat
Without cordial greeting. Thence with
speed
Up the familiar hill I took my way
Towards that sweet Valley¹ where I had
been reared;
'Twas but a short hour's walk, ere veer-
ing round
I saw the snow-white church upon her
hill
Sit like a throned Lady, sending out
A gracious look all over her domain.
Yon azure smoke betrays the lurking
town:
With eager footsteps I advance and reach
The cottage threshold where my journey
closed.
Glad welcome had I, with some tears,
perhaps,
From my old Dame, so kind and
motherly,
While she perused me with a parent's
pride.
The thoughts of gratitude shall fall like
dew
Upon thy grave, good creature! While
my heart
Can beat never will I forget thy name.
Heaven's blessing be upon thee where
thou liest
After thy innocent and busy stir
In narrow cares, thy little daily growth
Of calm enjoyments, after eighty years,
And more than eighty, of untroubled
life,
Childless, yet by the strangers to thy
blood
Honoured with little less than filial love.
What joy was mine to see thee once
again,
Thee and thy dwelling, and a crowd of
things
About its narrow precincts all beloved,
And many of them seeming yet my own!
Why should I speak of what a thousand
hearts
Have felt, and every man alive can guess?
The rooms, the court, the garden were not
left
Long unsaluted, nor the sunny seat
Round the stone table under the dark
pine,
Friendly to studious or to festive hours;
nor that unruly child of mountain birth,
the famous brook, who, soon as he was
Within a ed
With all its garden, found himself at once,
Did better suit insidious and unkind,
Far better, than his voice and left to dimple
Thrust out abru.

Wkshead.—F.d.

(Without an effort and without a will).
A channel paved by man's officious care.
I looked at him and smiled, and smiled
again,
And in the press of twenty thousand
thoughts,
"Ha," quoth I, "pretty prisoner, are
you there!"
Well might sarcastic Fancy then have
whispered,
"An emblem here behold of thy own life;
In its late course of even days with all
Their smooth enthrallment;" but the
heart was full,
Too full for that reproach. My aged
Dame
Walked proudly at my side: she guided
me;
I willing, nay—nay, wishing to be led:
—The face of every neighbour whom I
met
Was like a volume to me; some were
hailed
Upon the road, some busy at their work,
Unceremonious greetings interchanged,
With half the length of a long field be-
tween.
Among my schoolfellows I scattered
round
Like recognitions, but with some con-
straint
Attended, doubtless, with a little pride,
But with more shame, for my habiliments,
The transformation wrought by gay
attire.
Not less delighted did I take my place
At our domestic table: and, dear Friend!
In this endeavour simply to relate
A Poet's history, may I leave untold
The thankfulness with which I laid me
down
In my accustomed bed, more welcome
now
Perhaps than if it had been more desired
Or been more often thought of with
regret;
That lowly bed whence I had heard the
wind
Roar, and the rain beat hard; where I so
oft
Had lain awake on summer nights to
watch
The moon in splendour crouched among
the leaves
Of a tall ash, that near our cottage stood;
Had watched her with fixed eyes while to
and fro
In the dark summit of the waving tree
She rocked with every impulse of the
 breeze.

Among the favourites whom it pleased
me well

To see again, was one by ancient right
Our inmate, a rough terrier, of the hills;
By birth and call of nature pre-ordained
To hunt the badger and unearth the fox
Among the impervious crags, but having
been

From youth our own adopted, he had
passed

Into a gentler service. And when first
The boyish spirit flagged, and day by day
Along my veins I kindled with the stir,
The fermentation, and the vernal heat
Of poesy, affecting private shades

Like a sick Lover, then this dog was used
To watch me, an attendant and a friend.
Obssequious to my steps early and late,
Though often of such dilatory walk
Tired, and uneasy at the halts I made.
A hundred times when, roving high and
low,

I have been harassed with the toil of verse,
Much pains and little progress, and at
once

Some lovely Image in the song rose up
Full-formed, like Venus rising from the
sea;

Then have I darted forwards to let loose
My hand upon his back, with stormy joy,
Caressing him again and yet again.

And when at evening on the public way
I sauntered, like a river murmuring
And talking to itself when all things else
Are still, the creature trotted on before;
Such was his custom; but whene'er he
met

A passenger approaching, he would turn
To give me timely notice, and straight-
way,

Grateful for that admonishment, I hushed
My voice, composed my gait, and, with
the air

And mien of one whose thoughts are free,
advanced

To give and take a greeting that might
save

My name from piteous rumours, such as
wait

On men suspected to be crazed in brain.

Those walks well worthy to be prized
and loved—

Regretted!—that word, too, was on my
tongue,

But they were richly laden with all good,
And cannot be remembered but with
thanks

And gratitude, and perfect joy of heart—
Those walks in all their freshness now
came back

Like a returning Spring. When first I
made

Once more the circuit of our little lake,
If ever happiness hath lodged with man,

That day consummate happiness was

Wide-spreading, steady, calm, contem-
plative

The sun was set, or setting, when I left
Our cottage door, and evening soon
brought on

A sober hour, not winning or serene.
For cold and raw the air was, and un-
tuned.

But as a face we love is sweetest then
When sorrow damps it, or, whatever look
It chance to wear, is sweetest if the heart
Have fulness in herself; even so with me
It fared that evening. Gently did my
soul

Put off her veil, and, self-transmuted,
stood

Naked, as in the presence of her God.

While on I walked, a comfort seemed to
touch

A heart that had not been disconsolate:
Strength came where weakness was not,
known to be,

At least not felt; and restoration came
Like an intruder knocking at the door

Of unacknowledged weariness. I took
The balance, and with firm hand weighed
myself.

—Of that external scene which round
me lay,

Little, in this abstraction, did I see;
Remembered less: but I had inward hopes
And swellings of the spirit, was rapt and
soothed,

Conversed with promises, had glimmering
views

How life pervades the undecaying mind:
How the immortal soul with God-like
power

Informs, creates, and thaws the deepest
sleep

That time can lay upon her; how on
earth,

Man, if he do but live within the light
Of high endeavours, daily spreads abroad
His being armed with strength that can-
not fail.

Nor was there want of milder thoughts,
of love

Of innocence, and holiday repose;
And more than pastoral quiet, 'mid the
stir

Of boldest projects, and a peaceful end
At last, or glorious, by endurance won.
Thus musing, in a wood I sate me down

Alone, continuing there to muse: the
slopes

And heights meanwhile were slowly over-
spread

With darkness, and before a rippling
breeze [line,

The long lake lengthened out its hoary

And in the sheltered coppice where I sate,
 Around me from among the hazel leaves,
 Now here, now there, moved by the
 straggling wind,
 Came ever and anon a breath-like sound,
 Quick as the pantings of the faithful dog.
 The off and on companion of my walk;
 And such, at times, relieving them to be,
 I turned my head to look if he were there;
 Then into solemn thought I passed once
 more.

A freshness also found I at this time
 In human Life, the daily life of those
 Whose occupations really I loved;
 The peaceful scene oft filled me with sur-
 prise
 Changed like a garden in the heat of
 spring
 After an eight-days' absence. For (to
 omit
 The things which were the same and yet
 appeared
 Far otherwise) amid this rural solitude,
 A narrow Vale where each was known to
 all,
 'Twas not indifferent to a youthful mind
 To mark some sheltering bower or sunny
 nook,
 Where an old man had used to sit alone,
 Now vacant; pale-faced babes whom I
 had left
 In arms, now rosy prattlers at the feet
 Of a pleased grandame tottering up and
 down;
 And growing girls whose beauty, filched
 away
 With all its pleasant promises, was gone
 To deck some slighted playmate's homely
 cheek.

Yes, I had something of a subtler sense,
 And often looking round was moved to
 smiles
 Such as a delicate work of humour breeds;
 I read, without design, the opinions,
 thoughts,
 Of those plain-living people now observed
 With clearer knowledge; with another
 eye
 I saw the quiet-woodman in the woods,
 The shepherd roam the hills. With new
 delight,
 This chiefly, did I note my grey-haired
 Dame;
 Saw her go forth to church or other work
 Of state equipped in monumental trim;
 Short velvet cloak, (her bonnet of the
 like).
 A mantle such as Spanish Cavaliers
 Wore in old time. Her smooth domestic
 life,
 Affectionate without disquietude,

Her talk, her business, pleased me; and
 no less
 Her clear though shallow stream of piety
 That ran on Sabbath days a fresher
 course;
 With thoughts unfelt till now I saw her
 read
 Her Bible on hot Sunday afternoons,
 And loved the book, when she had
 dropped asleep
 And made of it a pillow for her head.

Nor less do I remember to have felt,
 Distinctly manifested at this time,
 A human-heartedness about my love
 For objects hitherto the absolute wealth
 Of my own private being and no more;
 Which I had loved, even, as a blessed
 spirit
 Or Angel, if he were to dwell on earth,
 Might love in individual happiness.
 But now there opened on me other
 thoughts
 Of change, congratulation or regret,
 A pensive, feeling! It spread far and
 wide;
 The trees, the mountains shared it; and
 the brooks,
 The stars of Heaven, now seen in their old
 haunts—
 White Sirius glittering o'er the southern
 crags,
 Orion with his belt, and those fair Seven,
 Acquaintances of every little child,
 And Jupiter, my own beloved star!
 Whatever shadings of mortality,
 Whatever imports from the world of
 death
 Had come among these objects hereto-
 fore,
 Were, in the main, of mood less tender:
 strong,
 Deep, gloomy were they, and severe; the
 scatterings
 Of awe or tremulous dread, that had given
 way
 In later youth to yearnings of a love
 Enthusiastic, to delight and hope.

As one who hangs down-bending from
 the side
 Of a slow-moving boat, upon the breast
 Of a still water, solacing himself
 With such discoveries as his eye can make
 Beneath him in the bottom of the deep,
 Sees many beauteous sights—weeds,
 fishes, flowers,
 Grots, pebbles, roots of trees, and fancies
 more,
 Yet often is perplexed, and cannot part
 The shadow from the substance, rocks
 and sky,
 Mountains and clouds, reflected in the
 depth

Of the clear flood, from things which
there abide
In their true dwelling; now is crossed
by gleam

Of his own image, by a sun-beam now,
And wavering motions sent he knows not
whence,

Impediments that make his task more
sweet;

Such pleasant office have we long pursued
Incumbent o'er the surface of past time
With like success, nor often have ap-
peared

Shapes fairer or less doubtfully discerned
Than these to which the Tale, indulgent
Friend!

Would now direct thy notice. Yet in
spite

Of pleasure won, and knowledge not with-
held,

There was an inner falling off—I loved,
Loved deeply all that had been loved
before,

More deeply even than ever: but a
swarm

Of heady schemes jostling each other,
gawds,

And feast and dance, and public revelry,
And sports and games (too grateful in
themselves,

Yet in themselves less grateful, I believe,
Than as they were a badge glossy and
fresh

Of manliness and freedom) all conspired
To lure my mind from firm habitual quest
Of feeding pleasures, to depress the zeal
And damp those yearnings which had
once been mine—

A wild, unworldly-minded youth, given
up

To his own eager thoughts. It would
demand

Some skill, and longer time than may be
spared

To paint these vanities, and how they
wrought

In haunts where they, till now, had been
unknown.

It seemed the very garments that I wore
Preyed on my strength, and stopped the
quiet stream

Of self-forgetfulness.

Yes, that heartless chase
Of trivial pleasures was a poor exchange
For books and nature at that early age.
'Tis true, some casual knowledge might
be gained

Of character or life; but at that time,
Of manners put to school I took small
note,

And all my deeper passions lay elsewhere.
Far better had it been to exalt the mind
By solitary study, to uphold

Intense desire through meditative peace;
And yet, for chastisement of these regrets,
The memory of one particular hour
Doth here rise up against me. Mid a
throng

Of maids and youths, old men, and
matrons staid,

A medley of all tempers, I had passed
The night in dancing, gaiety, and mirth,
With din of instruments and shuffling
feet,

And glancing forms, and tapers glittering,
And unaimed prattle flying up and down;
Spirits upon the stretch, and here and
there

Slight shocks of young love-liking inter-
spersed, [head,

Whose transient pleasure mounted to the
And tingled through the veins. Ere we
retired,

The cock had crowed, and now the eastern
sky

Was kindling, not unseen, from humble
copse

And open field, through which the path-
way wound,

And homeward led my steps. Magnifi-
cent

The morning rose, in memorable pomp,
Glorious as e'er I had beheld—in front,
The sea lay laughing at a distance; near,
The solid mountains shone, bright as the
clouds,

Grain-tinctured, drenched in empyrean
light;

And in the meadows and the lower
grounds

Was all the sweetness of a common
dawn—

Dews, vapours, and the melody of birds,
And labourers going forth to till the
fields.

Ah! need I say, dear Friend! that to the
brim

My heart was full; I made no vows, but
vows

Were then made for me; bond unknown
to me

Was given, that I should be, else sinning
greatly,

A dedicated Spirit. On I walked
In thankful blessedness, which yet sur-
vives.

Strange rendezvous! My mind was
at that time

A parti-coloured show of grave and gay,
Solid and light, short-sighted and pro-
found;

Of inconsiderate habits and sedate,
Consorting in one mansion unreprieved.
The worth I knew of powers that I
possessed.

Though slighted and too oft misused.

Besides,
That summer, swarming as it did with
thoughts

Transigent and idle, lacked not intervals
When Folly from the frown of fleeting
Time

Shrunk, and the mind experienced in
herself

Conformity as just as that of old
To the end and written spirit of God's
works,

Whether held forth in Nature or in Man,
Through pregnant vision, separate or
conjoined.

When from our better selves we have
too long

Been parted by the hurrying world, and
droop,

Sick of its business, of its pleasures tired,
How gracious, how benign, is Solitude;
How potent a mere image of her sway:
Most potent when impressed upon the
mind

With an appropriate human centre—
hermit,

Deep in the bosom of the wilderness;
Votary (in vast cathedral, where no foot
Is treading, where no other face is seen)
Kneeling at prayers; or watchman on
the top

Of lighthouse, beaten by Atlantic waves;
Or as the soul of that great Power is met
Sometimes embodied on a public road,
When, for the night deserted, it assumes
A character of quiet more profound
Than pathless wastes.

Once, when those summer months
Were flown, and autumn brought its
annual show

Of oars with oars contending, sails with
sails,

Upon Winander's spacious breast, it
chanced

That—after I had left a flower-decked
room

(Whose in-door pastime, lighted up, sur-
vived

To a late hour), and spirits overwrought
Were making night do penance for a day
Spent in a round of strenuous idleness—
My homeward course led up a long ascent,
Where the road's watery surface, to the
top

Of that sharp rising, glittered to the
moon

And bore the semblance of another
stream

Stealing with silent lapse to join the
brook

That murmured in the vale. All else
was still:

No living thing appeared in earth or air,
And, save the flowing water's peaceful
voice,

Sound there was none—but, lo! an un-
couth shape,

Shown by a sudden turning of the road,
So near that, slipping back into the shade
Of a thick hawthorn, I could mark him
well,

Myself unseen. He was of stature tall,
A span above man's common measure,
tall,

Stiff, lank, and upright; a more meagre
man

Was never seen before by night or day.
Long were his arms, pallid his hands; his
mouth

Looked ghastly in the moonlight; from
behind,

A mile-stone propped him; I could also
ken

That he was clothed in military garb,
Though faded, yet entire. Companion-
less,

No dog attending, by no staff sustained,
He stood, and in his very dress appeared
A desolation; a simplicity,

To which the trappings of a gaudy world
Make a strange back-ground. From his
lips, ere long,

Issued low muttered sounds, as if of pain
Or some uneasy thought; yet still his
form

Kept the same awful steadiness—at his
feet

His shadow lay, and moved not. From
self-blame

Not wholly free, I watched him thus; at
length

Subduing my heart's specious cowardice,
I left the shady nook where I had stood
And hailed him. Slowly from his resting-
place

He rose, and with a lean and wasted arm
In measured gesture lifted to his head
Returned my salutation; then resumed
His station as before; and when I asked
His history, the veteran, in reply,

Was neither slow nor eager; but, un-
moved,

And with a quiet uncomplaining voice,
A stately air of mild indifference,

He told in few plain words a soldier's
tale—

That in the Tropic Islands he had served,
Whence he had landed scarcely three
weeks past:

That on his landing he had been dis-
missed,

And now was travelling towards his
native home.

This heard, I said, in pity, "Come with
me."

He stooped, and straightway from the ground took up

An oaken staff by me yet unobserved—
A staff which must have dropped from his slack hand

And lay till now neglected in the grass. Though weak his step and cautious, he appeared

To travel without pain, and I beheld, With an astonishment but ill suppressed, His ghostly figure moving at my side ; Nor could I, while we journeyed thus, forbear

To turn from present hardships to the past, And speak of war, battle, and pestilence, Sprinkling this talk with questions, better spared,

On what he might himself have seen or felt.

He all the while was in demeanour calm, Concise in answer : solemn and sublime He might have seemed, but that in all he said

There was a strange half-absence, as of one

Knowing too well the importance of his theme,

But feeling it no longer. Our discourse Soon ended, and together on we passed In silence through a wood gloomy and still.

Up-turning, then, along an open field, We reached a cottage. At the door I knocked,

And earnestly to charitable care Commended him as a poor friendless man, Belated and by sickness overcome.

Assured that now the traveller would, repose

In comfort, I entreated that henceforth He would not linger in the public ways, But ask for timely furtherance and help Such as his state required. At this reproof,

With the same ghastly mildness in his look,

He said, "My trust is in the God of Heaven,

And in the eye of him who passes me!"

The cottage door was speedily unbarred,

And now the soldier touched his hat once more

With his lean hand, and in a faltering voice, Whose tone bespoke reviving interests Till then unfelt, he thanked me ; I returned

The farewell blessing of the patient man, And so we parted. Back I cast a look, And lingered near the door a little space, Then sought with quiet heart my distant home.

BOOK FIFTH

• BOOKS

WHEN Contemplation, like the night-calm felt

Through earth and sky, spreads widely, and sends deep

Into the soul its tranquillising power, Even then I sometimes grieve for thee,

O Man, Earth's paramount Creature ! not so much for woes

That thou endurest ; heavy though that weight be,

Cloud-like it mounts, or touched with light divine

Doth melt away ; but for those palms achieved,

Through length of time, by patient exercise

Of study and hard thought ; there, there, it is

That sadness finds its fuel. Hitherto, In progress through this Verse, my mind hath looked

Upon the speaking face of earth and heaven

As her prime teacher, intercourse with man

Established by the sovereign Intellect, Who through that bodily image hath diffused,

As might appear to the eye of fleeting time,

A, deathless spirit. Thou also, man ! hast wrought,

For commerce of thy nature with herself,

Things that aspire to unconquerable life ; And yet we feel—we cannot choose but feel—

That they must perish. Tremblings of the heart

It gives, to think that our immortal being No more shall need such garments ; and yet man,

As long as he shall be the child of earth, Might almost "weep to have" what he may lose,

Nor be himself extinguished, but survive, Abject, depressed, forlorn, disconsolate.

A thought is with me sometimes, and I say,—

Should the whole frame of earth by inward throes

Be wrenched, or fire come down from far to scorch

Her pleasant habitations, and dry up Old Ocean, in his bed left singed and bare, Yet would the living Presence still persist

Victorious, and composure would ensue, And kindlings like the morning—presage, sure

Of day returning and of life revived. But all the meditations of mankind,

Yea, all the adamantine holds of truth By reason built, or passion, which itself

Is highest reason in a soul sublime; The consecrated works of Bard and Sage,

Sensuous or intellectual, wrought by men, Twin labourers and heirs of the same hopes;

Where would they be? Oh! why hath not the Mind

Some element to stamp her image on In nature somewhat nearer to her own?

Why, gifted with such powers to send abroad

Her spirit, must it lodge in shrines so frail?

One day, when from my lips a like complaint

Had fallen in presence of a studious friend,

He with a smile made answer, that in truth

'Twas going far to seek disquietude: But on the front of his reproof confessed

That he himself had oftentimes given way

To kindred hauntings. Whereupon I told,

That once in the stillness of a summer's noon,

While I was seated in a rocky cave By the sea-side, perusing, so it chanced,

The famous history of the errant knight Recorded by Cervantes, these same thoughts

Beset me, and to height unusual rose, While listlessly I sate, and, having closed

The book, had turned my eyes toward the wide sea.

On poetry and geometric truth, And their high privilege of lasting life,

From all internal injury exempt, I mused; upon these chiefly: and at length,

My senses yielding to the sultry air, Sleep seized me, and I passed into a dream.

I saw before me stretched a boundless plain

Of sandy wilderness, all black and void,

And as I looked around, distress and fear Came creeping over me, when at my side,

Close at my side, an uncouth shape appeared

Upon a dromedary, mounted high. He seemed an Arab of the Bedouin tribes:

A lance he bore, and underneath one arm A stone, and in the opposite hand a shell

Of a surpassing brightness. At the sight Much I rejoiced, not doubting but a guide

Was present, one who with unerring skill Would through the desert lead me; and while yet

I looked and looked, self-questioned what this freight

Which the new comer carried through the waste

Could mean, the Arab told me that the stone

(To give it in the language of the dream) Was "Euclid's Elements;" and "This,"

said he,

"Is something of more worth;" and at the word

Stretched forth the shell, so beautiful in shape,

In colour so resplendent, with command That I should hold it to my ear. I did so,

And heard that instant in an unknown tongue,

Which yet I understood, articulate sounds,

A loud prophetic blast of harmony; An Ode, in passion uttered, which foretold

Destruction to the children of the earth By deluge, now at hand. No sooner

ceased

The song, than the Arab with calm look declared

That all would come to pass of which the voice

Had given forewarning, and that he himself

Was going then to bury those two books: The one that held acquaintance with the stars,

And wedded soul to soul in purest bond Of reason, undisturbed by space or time;

The other that was a god, yea many gods, Had voices more than all the winds, with power

To exhilarate the spirit, and to soothe, Through every clime, the heart of human kind.

While this was uttering, strange as it may seem,

I wondered not, although I plainly saw The one to be a stone, the other a shell;

Nor doubted once but that they both were books,

Having a perfect faith in all that passed.
Far stronger, now, grew the desire I felt
To cleave unto this man; 'but when I
prayed

To share his enterprize, he 'hurried' on
Reckless of me: I followed, not unseen,
For oftentimes he cast a backward look,
Grasping his twofold treasure.—Lance in
rest, [now
He rode, I keeping pace with him; and
He, to my fancy, had become the knight
Whose tale Cervantes tells: yet not the
knight,

But was an Arab of the Desert too;
Of these was neither, and was both at
once.

His countenance, meanwhile, grew more
disturbed;

And, looking backwards when he looked
nine eyes

Saw, over half the wilderness diffused,
A bed of glittering light: I asked the
cause:

"It is," said he, "the waters of the deep
Gathering upon us," quickening then the
pace

Of the unwieldy creature he bestrode,
He left me: I called after him aloud:
He heeded not; but, with his twofold
charge

Still in his grasp, before me, full in view,
Went hurrying o'er the illimitable waste,
With the fleet waters of a drowning world
In chase of him; whereat I waked in
terror,

And saw the sea before me, and the book,
In which I had been reading, at my side.

Full often, taking from the world a
sleep

This Arab phantom, which I thus beheld,
This semi-Quixote, I to him have given
A substance, fancied him a living man,
A gentle dweller in the desert, crazed
By love and feeling, and internal thought
Protracted among endless solitudes;
Have shaped him wandering upon this
quest!

Nor have I pitied him; but rather felt
Reverence was due to a being thus em-
ployed;

And thought that, in the blind and awful
lair

Of such a madness, reason did lie couched;
Enow there are on earth to take in charge
Their wives, their children, and their
virgin loves,

Or whatsoever else the heart holds dear;
Enow to stir for these; yea, will I say,
Contemplating in soberness the approach
Of an event so dire, by signs in earth
Or heaven made manifest, that I could
share

That maniac's fond anxiety, and go
Upon like errand. Oftentimes at least
Me hath such strong entrancement over-
come,

When I have held a volume in my hand,
Poor earthly casket of immortal verse,
Shakespeare, or Milton, labourers divine!

Great and benign, indeed, must be the
power

Of living nature, which could thus so
long

Detain me from the best of other guides
And dearest helpers, left unthanked,
unpraised,

Even in the time of lisping infancy;
And later down, in prattling childhood
even,

While I was travelling back among those
days,

How could I ever play an ingrate's part?
Once more should I have made those
bowers resound,

By intermingling strains of thankfulness
With their own thoughtless melodies; at
least

It might have well beseemed me to repeat
Some simply fashioned tale, to tell again,
In slender accents of sweet verse, some
tale

That did bewitch me then, and soothes
me now

O Friend! O Poet! brother of my soul,
Think not that I could pass along un-
touched

By these remembrances. Yet wherefore
speak?

Why call upon a few weak words to say
What is already written in the hearts
Of all that breathe?—what in the path
of all

Drops daily from the tongue of every
child,

Wherever man is found? The trickling
tear

Upon the cheek of listening Infancy
Proclaims it, and the insuperable look
That drinks as if it never could be full.

That portion of my story I shall leave
There registered: whatever else of power
Or pleasure sown, or fostered thus, may
be

Peculiar to myself, let that remain
'Where still it works, though hidden from
all search

Among the depths of time. Yet is it just
That here, in memory of all books which
lay

Their sure foundations in the heart of man,
Whether by native prose, or numerous
verse,

That in the name of all inspired souls—

From Homer the great Thunderer, from
the voice

That roars along the bed of Jewish song,
And that more varied and elaborate,
Those trumpet-tones of harmony that
shake

Our shores in England,—from those
loftiest notes

Down to the low and wren-like warblings,
made

For cottagers and spinners at the wheel,
And sun-burnt travellers resting their
tired limbs,

Stretched under wayside hedge-rows,
ballad tunes,

Food for the hungry ears of little ones,
And of old men who have survived their
joys—

'Tis just that in behalf of these, the works,
And of the men that framed them,
whether known

Or sleeping nameless in their scattered
graves,

That I should here assert their rights.
attest

Their honours, and should, once for all,
pronounce

Their benediction; speak of them as
Powers

For ever to be hallowed; only less,
For what we are and what we may be-
come,

Than Nature's self, which is the breath of
God,

Or His pure Word by miracle revealed.

Rarely and with reluctance would I
stoop

To transitory themes; yet I rejoice,
And, by these thoughts admonished,
will pour out

Thanks with uplifted heart, that I was
reared

Safe from an evil which these days have
Upon the children of the land, a pest
That might have dried me up, body and
soul.

This verse is dedicate to Nature's self,
And things that teach as Nature teaches:
then,

Oh! where had been the Man, the Poet
where,

Where had we been, we two, beloved
Friend!

If in the season of unperilous choice,
In lieu of wandering, as we did, through
vales,

Rich with indigenous produce, open
ground

Of Fancy, happy pastures ranged at will,
We had been followed, hourly watched,
and noosed,

Each in his several melancholy walk

Stringed like a poor man's heifer at its
feed,

Led through the lanes in forlorn servitude;
Or rather like a stalled ox debarred
From touch of growing grass, that may
not taste

A flower till it have yielded up its sweets
A prelibation to the mower's scythe.

Behold the parent hen amid her brood.
Though fledged and feathered, and well
pleased to part

And straggle from her presence, still a
brood,

And she herself from the maternal bond
Still undischarged; yet doth she little

more
Than move with them in tenderness and
love,

A centre to the circle which they make;
And now and then, alike from need of
theirs

And call of her own natural appetites,
She scratches, ransacks up the earth for
food,

Which they partake at pléasure. Early
died

My honoured Mother, she who was the
heart

And hinge of all our learning and our
loves:

She left us destitute, and, as we might,
Trooping together. Little suits it me

To break upon the sabbath of her rest
With any thought that looks at others'

blame;

Nor would I praise her but in perfect
love.

Hence am I checked: but let me boldly
say,

In gratitude, and for the sake of truth,
Unheard by her, that she, not falsely

taught,
Fetching her goodness rather from times
past,

Than shaping novelties for times to come,
Had no presumption, no such jealousy,

Nor did by habit of her thoughts mistrust
Our nature, but had virtual faith that He

Who fills the mother's breast with in-
nocent milk,

Doth also for our nobler part provide,
Under His great correction and control,

As innocent instincts, and as innocent
food;

Or draws for minds that are left free to
trust

In the simplicities of opening life
Sweet honey out of spurned or dreaded

weeds.

This was her creed, and therefore she
was pure

From anxious fear of error or mishap,

And evil, overweeningly so called ;
 Was not puffed up by false unnatural
 hopes,
 Nor selfish with unnecessary cares,
 Nor with impatience from the season
 asked
 More than its timely produce ; rather
 loved
 The hours for what they are, than from
 regard
 Glanced on their promises in restless
 pride.
 Such was she—not from faculties more
 strong
 Than others have, but from the times,
 perhaps,
 And spot in which she lived, and through
 a grace,
 Of modest meekness, simple-mindedness,
 A heart that found benignity and hope,
 Being itself benign.

My drift I fear

Is scarcely obvious ; but, that common
 sense
 May try this modern system by its
 fruits,
 Leave let me take to place before her
 sight
 A specimen portrayed with faithful
 hand.
 Full early trained to worship seamliness,
 this model of a child is never known
 To mix in quarrels ; that were far
 beneath
 Its dignity : with gifts he bubbles o'er
 As generous as a fountain ; selfishness
 May not come near him, nor the little
 throng
 Of fitting pleasures tempt him from his
 path ;
 The wandering beggars propagate his
 name,
 Dumb creatures find him tender as a nun,
 And natural or supernatural fear,
 Unless it leap upon him in a dream,
 Touches him not. To enhance the wou-
 der, see
 How arch his notices, how nice his sense
 Of the ridiculous ; not blind is he
 To the broad follies of the licensed world,
 Yet innocent himself withal, though
 shrewd,
 And can read lectures upon innocence,
 A miracle of scientific lore,
 Ships he can guide across the pathless
 sea,
 And tell you all their cunning ; he can
 read
 The inside of the earth, and spell the
 stars ;
 He knows the policies of foreign lands ;
 Can string you names of districts, cities,
 towns,

W.P.

The whole world over, tight as beads of
 dew
 Upon a gossamer thread ; he sifts, he
 weighs ;
 All things are put to question ; he must
 live
 Knowing that he grows wiser every day
 Or else not live at all, and seeing too
 Each little drop of wisdom as it falls
 Into the dimpling cistern of his heart :
 For this unnatural growth the trainer
 blame,
 Pity the tree.—Poor human vanity,
 Wert thou extinguished, little would be
 left
 Which he could truly love ; but how
 escape ?
 For, ever as a thought of purer birth
 Rises to lead him toward a better clime,
 Some intermeddler still is on the watch
 To drive him back, and pound him, like a
 stray,
 Within the pinfold of his own conceit.
 Meanwhile old grandame earth is grieved
 to find
 The playthings, which her love designed
 for him,
 Unthought of : in their woodland beds
 the flowers
 Weep, and the river sides are all forlorn.
 Oh ! give us once again the wishing cap
 Of Fortunatus, and the invisible coat
 Of Jack the Giant-killer, Robin Hood,
 And Sabra in the forest with St. George !
 The child, whose love is here, at least,
 doth reap
 One precious gain, that he forgets himself.

These mighty workmen of our later age,
 Who, with a broad highway, have over-
 bridged
 The froward chaos of futurity,
 Tamed to their bidding ; they who have
 the skill
 To manage books, and things, and make
 them act
 On infant minds as surely as the sun
 Deals with a flower ; the keepers of our
 time,
 The guides and wardens of our faculties,
 Sages who in their prescience would con-
 trol
 All accidents, and to the very road
 Which they have fashioned would confine
 us down,
 Like engines ; when will their presump-
 tion learn,
 That in the unreasoning progress of the
 world
 A wiser spirit is at work for us,
 A better eye than theirs, most prodigal
 Of blessings, and most studious of our
 good,

K K

Even in what seem our most unfruitful hours ?

¹ There was a Boy : ye knew him well,
ye cliffs

And islands of Winander !—many a time
At evening, when the earliest stars begin
To move along the edges of the hills,
Rising or setting, would he stand alone
Beneath the trees or by the glimmering
lake,

And there, with fingers interwoven, both
hands

Pressed closely palm to palm, and to his
mouth

Uplifted, he, as through an instrument,
Blew mimic hootings to the silent owls,
That they might answer him ; and they
would shout

Across the watery vale, and shout again,
Responsive to his call, with quivering
peals,

And long halloos and screams, and echoes
loud,

Redoubled ; and redoubled, concourse
wild

Of jocund din ; and, when a lengthened
pause

Of silence came and baffled his best skill,
Then sometimes, in that silence while he
hung

Listening, a gentle shock of mild surprise
Has carried far into his heart the voice
Of mountain torrents ; or the visible
scene

Would enter unawares into his mind,
With all its solemn imagery, its rocks,
Its woods, and that uncertain heaven,
received

Into the bosom of the steady lake.

This Boy was taken from his mates,
and died

In childhood, ere he was full twelve years
old.

Fair is the spot, most beautiful the vale
Where he was born ; the grassy church-
yard hangs

Upon a slope above the village school,
And through that churchyard when my
way has led

On summer evenings, I believe that there
A long half hour together I have stood
Mute, looking at the grave in which he
lies !

Even now appears before the mind's clear
eye

That self-same village church ; I see her
sit

(The thrond Lady whom erewhile we
hailed)

On her green hill, forgetful of this Boy

Who slumbers at her feet,—forgetful, too,
Of all her silent neighbourhood of graves,
And listening only to the gladsome sounds
That, from the rural school ascending,
play

Beneath her and about her. May she
long

Behold a race of young ones like to those
With whom I herded !—(easily, indeed,
'We might have fed upon a fatter soil,
Of arts and letters—but be that for-
given)—

A race of real children ; not too wise,
Too learned, or too good ; but wanton,

fresh, [hate ;

And bandied up and down by love and
Not unresentful where self-justified ;

Fierce, roody, patient, venturous,
modest, shy ;

Mad at their sports like withered leaves in
winds ;

Though doing wrong and suffering, and
+ full oft

Bending beneath our life's, mysterious
weight,

Of pain, and doubt, and fear, yet yielding
not

In happiness to the happiest upon earth.
Simplicity in habit, truth in speech,

Be these the daily strengtheners of their
minds ;

May books and Nature be their early joy ;
And knowledge, rightly honoured with
that name—

Knowledge not purchased by the loss of
power !

Well do I call to mind the very week
When I was first intrusted to the care
Of that sweet Valley ; when its paths, its
shores,

And brooks were like a dream of novelty
To my half-infant-thoughts ; that very
week,

While I was roving up and down alone,
Seeking I knew not what, I chanced to
cross

One of those open fields, which, shaped
like ears,

Make green peninsulas on Esthwaite's
Lake :

Twilight was coming on, yet through the
gloom

Appeared distinctly on the opposite shore
A heap of garments, as if left by one

Who might have there been bathing,
Long I watched,

But no one owned them ; meanwhile the
calm lake

Grew dark with all the shadows on its
breast,

And, now and then, a fish up-leaping
snapped

¹ See p. 148.—Ed.

The breathless stillness. The succeeding
 day,
 Those unclaimed garments telling a plain
 tale
 Drew to the spot an anxious crowd ; some
 looked
 In passive expectation from the shore,
 While from a boat others hung o'er the
 deep,
 Sounding with grappling irons and long
 poles.
 At last, the dead man, 'mid that beau-
 teous scene
 Of trees and hills and water, bolt upright
 Rose, with his ghastly face, a spectre
 shape
 Of terror ; yet so soul-debasing fear,
 Young as I was, a child not nine years old,
 Possessed me, for my inner eye had seen
 Such sights before, among the shining
 streams
 Of fairy land, the forest of romance.
 Their spirit hallowed the sad spectacle
 With decoration of ideal grace ;
 A dignity, as smoothness, like the works
 Of Grecian art, and purest poetry.

A precious treasure had I long pos-
 sessed,
 A little yellow, canvas-covered book,
 A slender abstract of the Arabian tales ;
 And, from companions in a new abode,
 When first I learnt, that this dear prize of
 mine
 Was but a block hewn from a mighty
 quarry—
 That there were four large volumes, laden
 all
 With kindred matter, 'twas to me, in
 truth,
 A promise scarcely earthly. Instantly,
 With one not richer than myself, I made
 A covenant that each should lay aside
 The moneys he possessed, and hoard up
 more,
 Till our joint savings had amassed enough
 To make this book our own. Through
 several months,
 In spite of all temptation, we preserved
 Religiously that vow ; but firmness failed,
 Nor were we ever masters of our wish.

And when thereafter to my father's
 house
 The holidays returned me, there to find
 That golden store of books which I had
 left,
 What joy was mine ! How often in the
 course
 Of those glad respites, though a soft west
 wind
 Ruffled the waters to the angler's wish,
 For a whole day together, have I lain

Down by thy side, O Derwent ! murmur-
 ing stream,
 On the hot stones, and in the glaring sun,
 And there have read, devouring as I
 read,
 Defrauding the day's glory, desperate !
 Till with a sudden pound of smart re-
 proach,
 Such as an idler deals with in his shame,
 I to the sport betook myself again.

A gracious spirit o'er this earth pre-
 sides,
 And o'er the heart of man ; invisibly
 It comes, to works of unproved delight,
 And tendency benign, directing those
 Who care not, know not, think not what
 they do.
 The tales that charm away the wakeful
 night
 In Araby, romances : legends penned
 For solace by dim light of monkish lamps ;
 Fictions, for ladies of their love, devised
 By youthful squires ; adventures endless,
 spun
 By the dismantled warrior in old age,
 Out of the bowels of those very schemes
 In which his youth did first extravagate ;
 These spread like day, and something in
 the shape
 Of these will live till man shall be no
 more.
 Dumb yearnings, hidden appetites, are
 ours,
 And they must have their food. Our child-
 hood sits,
 Our simple childhood, sits upon a throne
 That hath more power than all the
 elements.
 I guess not what this tells of Being past,
 Nor what it augurs of the life to come ;
 But so it is, and, in that dubious hour,
 That twilight when we first begin to see
 This dawning earth, to recognise, expect,
 And, in the long probation that ensues,
 The time of trial, ere we learn to live
 In reconciliation with our stunted powers ;
 To endure this state of meagre vassalage,
 Unwilling to forego, confess, submit,
 Uneasy and unsettled, yoke-fellows
 To custom, mettlesome, and not yet
 tamed
 And humbled down ; oh ! then we feel,
 we feel,
 We know where we have friends. Ye
 dreamers, then,
 Forgers of daring tales ! we bless you then,
 Impostors, drivellers, dotards, as the ape
 Philosophy will call you : then we feel
 With what, and how great might ye are
 in league,
 Who make our wish, our power, our
 thought a deed,

An empire, a possession,—ye whom time
And seasons serve; all Faculties to whom
Earth crouches, the elements are potter's
clay;

Space like a heaven filled up with northern
lights, [once.]

Here, nowhere, there, and everywhere; at

Relinquishing this lofty eminence
For ground, though humbler, not the less
a tract

Of the same isthmus, which our spirit
cross

In progress from their native continent
To earth and human life, the Song might
dwell

On that delightful time of growing youth,
When craving for the marvellous gives
way

To strengthening love for things that we
have seen:

When sober truth and steady sympathies,
Offered to notice by less daring pens,
Take firmer hold of us, and words them-
selves

Move us with conscious pleasure.

I am sad
At thought of rapture now for ever flown:
Almost to tears I sometimes could be sad
To think of, to read over, many a page,
Poems withal of name, which at that
time

Did never fail to entrance me, and are
now

Dead in my eyes, dead as a theatre
Fresh emptied of spectators. Twice
five years

Or less I might have seen, when first my
mind

With conscious pleasure opened to the
charm

Of words in tune and order, found them
sweet

For their own sakes, a passion, and a
power:

And phrases pleased me chosen for de-
light,

For pomp, or love. Oft, in the public
roads

Yet unfrequented, while the morning
light

Was yellowing the hill tops, I went abroad
With a dear friend, and for the better
part

Of two delightful hours we strolled along
By the still borders of the misty lake,
Repeating favourite verses with one voice,

Or conning more, as happy as the birds—
That round us chaunted. Well might we
be glad,

Lifted above the ground by airy fancies,
More bright than madness or the dreams
of wine;

And, though full oft the objects of our
love

Were false, and in their splendour over-
wrought,

Yet was there surely then no vulgar power
Working within us,—nothing less, in
truth,

Than that most noble attribute of man,
Though yet untutored and unadorned,

That wish for something loftier, more
adorned,

Than is the common aspect, daily garb
Of human life. What wonder, then, if
sounds

Of exultation echoed through the groves!
For, images, and sentiments, and words,

And everything encountered or pursued
In that delicious world of poetry,
Kept holiday, a never-ending show,
With music, incense, festival, and flowers!

Here must we pause: "this only let me
add,

From heart-experience, and in humblest
sense

Of modesty, that he, who in his youth
A daily wanderer among woods and fields

With living Nature hath been intimate,
Not only in that raw unpractised time

Is stirred to ecstasy, as others are,
By glittering verse; but further, doth

receive,
In measure only dealt out to himself,

Knowledge and increase of enduring joy
From the great Nature that exists in

works
Of mighty Poets. Visionary power

Attends the motions of the viewless winds,
Embodied in the mystery of words:

There, darkness makes abode, and all the
host

Of shadowy things work endless changes,
—there,

As in a mansion like their proper home,
Even forms and substances are circum-

fused
By that transparent veil with light divine,

And, through the turnings intricate of
verse,

Present themselves as objects recognised,
In flashes, and with glory not their own.

BOOK SIXTH

CAMBRIDGE AND THE ALPS

THE leaves were fading when to Esthwaite's banks

And the simplicities of cottage life

I bade farewell; and, one among the youth

Who, summoned by that season, reunite
As scattered birds troop to the fowler's lure,

Went back to Granta's cloisters, not so prompt

Or eager, though as gay and undepressed
In mind, as when I thence had taken flight

A few short months before. I turned my face

Without repining from the coves and heights

Clothed in the sunshine of the withering fern:

Quitted, not lost, the mild magnificence
Of calmer lakes and louder streams; and you,

Frank-hearted maids of rocky Cumberland,

You and your not unwelcome days of mirth,

Relinquished, and your nights of revelry,
And in my own unlovely cell sate down

In lightsome mood—such privilege has youth

That cannot take long leave of pleasant thoughts.

The bonds of indolent society
Relaxing in their hold, henceforth I lived

More to myself. Two winters may be passed

Without a separate notice many books
Were skimmed, devoured, or studiously

perused,

But with no settled plan. I was detached
Internally from academic cares;

Yet independent study seemed a course
Of hardy disobedience toward friends

And kindred, proud rebellion and unkind.
This spurious virtue, rather let it bear

A name it now deserves, this cowardice,
Gave treacherous sanction to that over-

love

Of freedom which encouraged me to turn
From regulations even of my own

As from restraints and bonds. Yet who can tell—

Who knows what thus may have been gained, both then

And at a later season, or preserved;
What love of nature, what original

strength
Of contemplation, what intuitive truths

The deepest and the best, what keen research,

Unbiased, unbewildered, and unawed?

The Poet's soul was with me at that time;

Sweet meditations, the still overflow
Of present happiness, while future years

Lacked not anticipations, tender dreams,
No few of which have since been realised;

And some remain, hopes for my future life.

Four years and thirty, told this very week,

Have I been now a sojourner on earth,
By sorrow not unsuited; yet for me

Life's morning radiance hath not left the hills,

Her dew is on the flowers. Those were the days

Which also first emboldened me to trust
With firmness, hitherto out slightly

touched
By such a daring thought, that I might leave

Some monument behind me which pure hearts

Should reverence. The instinctive humbleness,

Maintained even by the very name and thought

Of printed books and authorship, began
To melt away; and further, the dread

awe
Of mighty names was softened down and seemed

Approachable, admitting fellowship
Of modest sympathy. Such aspect now,

Though not familiarly, my mind put on,
Content to observe, to achieve, and to

enjoy.

All winter long, whenever free to choose,

Did I by night frequent the College grove
And tributary walks; the last, and oft

The only one, who had been lingering there

Through hours of silence, till the porter's bell,

A punctual follower on the stroke of nine,

Rang with its blunt unceremonious voice,
Inexorable summons! Lofty elms,

Inviting shades of opportune recess,
Bestowed composure on a neighbourhood

Unpeaceful in itself. A single tree
With sinuous trunk, boughs exquisitely

wreathed,
Grew there; an ash which Winter for himself

Decked out with pride, and with out-
landish grace :

Up from the ground, and almost to the
top,

The trunk and every master branch were
green

With clustering ivy, and the lightsome
twigs

And outer spray profusely tipped with
seeds

That hung in yellow tassels, while the
air

Stirred them, not voiceless. Often have
I stood

Foot-bound uplooking at this lovely tree
Beneath a frosty moon. The hemisphere
Of magic fiction, verse of mine perchance
May never tread ; but scarcely Spenser's
self

Could have more tranquil visions in his
youth,

Or could more bright appearances create
Of human forms with superhuman
powers,

Than I beheld loitering on calm clear
nights

Alone, beneath this fairy work of earth.

On the vague reading of a truant
youth

'Twere idle to descant. My inner judg-
ment

Not seldom differed from my taste in
books,

As if it appertained to another mind,
And yet the books which then I valued
most

Are dearest to me now ; for, having
scanned,

Not heedlessly, the laws, and watched
the forms

Of Nature, in that knowledge I possessed
A standard, often usefully applied,
Even when unconsciously, to things re-
moted

From a familiar sympathy.—In fine,
I was a better judge of thoughts than
words,

Misled in estimating words, not only
By common inexperience of youth,
But by the trade in classic niceties,
The dangerous craft of culling term and
phrase

From languages that want the living
voice

To carry meaning to the natural heart ;
To tell us what is passion, what is truth,
What reason, what simplicity and sense.

Yet may we not entirely overlook
The pleasure gathered from the rudiments
Of geometric science. Though advanced
In these inquiries, with regret I speak,

No farther than the threshold, there I
found

Both elevation and composed delight :
With Indian awe and wonder, ignorance
pleased

With its own struggles, did I meditate
On the relation those abstractions bear
To Nature's laws, and by what process
led,

Those immaterial agents bowed their
heads

Duly to serve the mind of earth-born
From star to star, from kindred sphere
to sphere,

From system on to system without end.

More frequently from the same source I
drew

A pleasure quiet and profound, a sense
Of permanent and universal sway,
And paramount belief ; there, recognised
A type, for finite natures, of the one

Supreme Existence, the surpassing life
Which—to the boundaries of space and
time,

Of melancholy space and doleful time,
Superior and incapable of change,

Nor touched by welterings of passion—
is,

And hath the name of, God. Transcen-
dent peace

And silence did await upon these thoughts
That were a frequent comfort to my
youth.

'Tis told by one whom stormy waters
threw,

With fellow-sufferers by the shipwreck
spared,

Upon a desert coast, that having brought
To land a single volume, saved by chance,

A treatise of Geometry, he won't,
Although of food and clothing destitute,

And beyond common wretchedness de-
pressed,

To part from company and take this book
(Then first a self-taught pupil in its
truths)

To spots remote, and draw his diagrams
With a long staff upon the sand, and thus
Did oft beguile his sorrow, and almost
Forget his feeling : so (if like effect

From the same cause produced, mid out-
ward things

So different, may rightly be compared,)

So was it then with me, and so will be
With Poets ever. Mighty is the charm

Of those abstractions to a mind beset
With images and haunted by herself,

And specially delightful unto me
Was that clear synthesis built up aloft

So gracefully ; even then when it ap-
peared

Not more than a mere plaything, or a toy
To sense embodied : not the thing it is
In verity, an independent world,
Created out of pure intelligence.

Such dispositions then were mine un-
earned

By aught, I fear, of genuine desert—
Mine, through heaven's grace and inborn
aptitudes.

And not to leave the story of that time
Imperfect, with these habits must be
joined,

Moods melancholy, fits of spleen, that
loved

A pensive sky, sad days, and piping winds,
The twilight more than dawn, autumn
than spring ;

A treasured and luxurious gloom of choice
And inclination mainly, and the mere
Redundancy of youth's contentedness.
—To time thus spent, add multitudes of
hours

Pilfered away, by what the Bard who
sang

Of the Enchanter Indolence hath called
" Good-natured lounging," and behold a
map

Of my collegiate life—far less intense
Than duty called for, or, without regard
To duty, might have sprung up of itself
By change of accidents, or even, to speak
Without unkindness, in another place.
Yet why take refuge in that plea?—the
fault,

This I repeat, was mine : mine be the
blame.

In summer, making quest for works of
art,

Or scenes renowned for beauty, I ex-
plored

That steamlet whose blue current works
its way

Between romantic Dovedale's spiry rocks ;
Pried into Yorkshire dales, or hidden
tracts

Of my own native region, and was blest
Between these sundry wanderings with
a joy

Above all joys, that seemed another morn
Risen on mid noon ; blest with the pre-
sence, Friend !

Of that sole Sister, her who hath been
long,

Dear to thee also, thy true friend and
mine,

Now, after separation desolate,
Restored to me—such absence that she
seemed

A gift then first bestowed. The varied
banks

Of Emont, hitherto unnamed in song,
And that monastic castle 'mid tall trees,

Low standing by the margin of the stream,
A mansion visited (as fame reports)

By Sidney, where, in sight of our Helvellyn,
Or stormy Cross-fell, snatches he might
pen

Of this Arcadia, by fraternal love
Inspired ;—that river, and those moulder-
ing towers

Have seen us side by side, when, having
clomb

The darksome windings of a broken stair,
and crept along a ridge of fractured wall,
Not without trembling, we in safety
looked

Forth, through some Gothic window's
open space,

And gathered with one mind a rich re-
ward

From the far-stretching landscape, by the
light

Of morning beautified, or purple eve ;
Or, not less pleased, lay on some turret's
head,

Catching from tufts of grass and hare-
bell flowers

Their faintest whisper to the passing
breeze,

Given out while mid-day heat oppressed
the plains.

Another maid there was, who also shed
A gladness o'er that season, then to me,
By her exulting outside look of youth
And placid under-countenance, first en-
deared ;

That other spirit, Coleridge ! who is now
So near to us, that meek confiding heart,
So revered by us both. O'er paths
and fields

In all that neighbourhood, through narrow
lanes [woods,

Of eglantine, and through the shady
And o'er the Border Beacon, and the
waste

Of naked pools, and common crags that
lay

Exposed on the bare fell, were scattered
love,

The spirit of pleasure, and youth's golden
gleam.

O Friend ! we had not seen thee at that
time,

And yet a power is on me, and a strong
Confusion, and I seem to plant thee there.

Far art thou wandered now in search of
health

And milder breezes,—melancholy lot !
But thou art with us, with us in the past,

The present, with us in the times to come.
There is no grief, no sorrow, no despair,

No languor, no dejection, no dismay,
No absence scarcely can, there be, for
those

Who love as we do. Speed thee well!
 divide
 With us thy pleasure; thy returning
 strength,
 Receive it daily as a joy of ours;
 Share with us thy fresh spirits, whether
 gift
 Of gales Etesian or of tender thoughts.

I, too, have been a wanderer; but,
 alas!

How different the fate of different men
 Though mutually unknown, yea nursed
 and reared

As if in several elements, we were framed
 To bend at last to the same discipline,
 Predestined, if two beings ever were,
 To seek the same delights, and have one
 health,

One happiness. Throughout this narra-
 tive,

Else sooner ended, I have borne in mind
 For whom it registers the birth, and
 marks the growth,

Of gentleness, simplicity, and truth,
 And joyous loves, that hallow innocent
 days

Of peace and self-command. Of rivers,
 fields,

And groves I speak to thee, my Friend!
 to thee,

Who, yet a liveried schoolboy, in the
 depths

Of the huge city, on the leaded roof
 Of that wide edifice, thy school and home,
 Wert used to lie and gaze upon the clouds
 Moving in heaven; or, of that pleasure
 tired,

To shut thine eyes, and by internal light
 See trees, and meadows, and thy native
 stream,

Far distant, thus beheld from year to year
 Of a long exile. Nor could I forget,

In this late portion of my argument,
 That scarcely, as my term of pupillage

Ceased, had I left those academic bowers
 When thou wert thither guided. From
 the heart

Of London, and from cloisters there, thou
 camest,

And didst sit down in temperance and
 peace.

A rigorous student. What a stormy
 course

Then followed. Oh! it is a pang that
 calls

For utterance, to think what easy change
 Of circumstances might to thee have
 spared

A world of pain, ripened a thousand hopes,
 For ever withered. Through this retro-
 spect

Of my collegiate life I still have had

Thy after-sojourn in the self-same place
 Present before my eyes, have played with
 times

And accidents as children do with cards,
 Or as a man, who, when his house is built,
 A frame locked up in wood and stone,
 doth still.

As impotent fancy prompts, by his fire-
 side,

Rebuild it to his liking. I have thought
 Of thee, thy learning, gorgeous eloquence,
 And all the strength and plumage of thy
 youth,

Thy subtle speculations, toils abstruse
 Among the schoolmen, and Platonic forms
 Of wild ideal pageantry, shaped out
 From things well-matched or ill, and
 word, for things,

The self-created sustenance of a mind
 Debarred from Nature's living images,
 Compelled to be a life unto herself,
 And unrelentingly possessed by thirst

Of greatness, love, and beauty. Not
 alone,

Ah! surely not in singleness of heart
 Should I have seen the light of evening
 fade

From smooth Cam's silent waters: had
 we met,

Even at that early time, needs must I
 trust

In the belief, that my maturer age,
 My calmer habits, and more steady voice,
 Would with an influence benign have
 soothed,

Or chased away, the airy wretchedness
 That battered on thy youth. But thou
 hast trod

A march of glory, which doth put to
 shame

These vain regrets; health suffers in thee,
 else

Such grief for thee would be the weakest
 thought

That ever harboured in the breast of man.

A passing word erewhile did lightly
 touch

On wanderings of my own, that now em-
 braced

With livelier hope a region wider far.

When the third summer freed us from
 restraint,

A youthful friend, he too a mountaineer,
 Not slow to share my wishes, took his
 staff,

And sallying forth, we journeyed side by
 side,

Bound to the distant Alps. A hardy
 slight

Did this unprecedented course imply
 Of college studies and their set rewards

Nor had, in truth, the scheme been
 formed by me
 Without uneasy forethought of the pain,
 The censures, and ill-omening of those
 To whom my worldly interests were
 dear.
 But Nature then was sovereign in my
 mind,
 And mighty forms, seizing a youthful
 fancy,
 Had given a charter to irregular hopes.
 In any age of uneventful calms
 Among the nations, surely would my
 heart
 Have been possessed by similar desire ;
 But Europe at that time was thrilled
 with joy.
 France standing on the top of golden
 hours,
 And human nature seeming born again.
 Lightly equipped, and but a few brief
 looks
 Cast on the white cliffs of our native
 shore,
 From the receding vessel's deck, we
 chanced
 To land at Calais on the very eve
 Of that great federal day ; and there we
 saw,
 In a mean city, and among a few,
 How bright a face is worn when joy of one
 Is joy for tens of millions. Southward
 thence
 We held our way, direct through hamlets,
 towns,
 Gaudy with reliques of that festival.
 Flowers left to wither on triumphal arcs,
 And window-garlands. On the public
 roads,
 And, once, three days successively,
 through paths
 By which our toilsome journey was
 abridged,
 Among sequestered villages we walked
 And found benevolence and blessedness
 Spread like a fragrance everywhere, when
 spring
 Hath left no corner of the land untouched ;
 Where elms for many and many a league
 in files
 With their thin umbrage, on the stately
 roads
 Of that great kingdom, rustled o'er our
 heads,
 For ever fear us as we paced along :
 How sweet at such a time, with such
 delight
 On every side, in prime of youthful
 strength,
 To feed a Poet's tender melancholy.
 And fond conceit of sadness, with the
 sound

Of undulations varying as might please
 The wind that swayed them ; once, and
 more than once,
 Unhoused beneath the evening star we
 saw
 Dances of liberty, and in late hours
 Of darkness, dances in the open air
 Diftly prolonged, though grey-haired
 lookers on
 Might waste their breath in chiding :
 Under hills—
 The vine-clad hills and slopes of Bur-
 gundy,
 Upon the bosom of the gentle Saone
 We glided forward with the flowing
 stream.
 Swift Rhone ! thou wert the wings on
 which we cut
 A winding passage with majestic ease
 Between thy lofty rocks. Enchanting
 show
 Those woods and farms and orchards did
 present,
 And single cottages and lurking towns,
 Reach after reach, succession without
 end
 Of deep and stately vales ! A lonely pair
 Of strangers, till day closed, we sailed
 along
 Clustered together with a merry crowd
 Of those emancipated, a blithe host
 Of travellers, chiefly delegates, returning
 From the great spousals newly solemnised.
 At their chief city, in the sight of Heaven,
 Like bees they swarmed, gaudy and gay
 as bees ;
 Some vapoured in the unruliness of joy,
 And with their swords flourished as if to
 fight
 The saucy air. In this proud company
 We landed—took with them our evening
 meal,
 Guests welcome almost as the angels
 were
 To Abraham of old. The supper done,
 With flowing cups elate and happy
 thoughts
 We rose at signal given, and formed a
 ring
 And, hand in hand, danced round and
 round the board ;
 All hearts were open, every tongue was
 loud
 With amity and glee : we bore a name
 Honoured in France, the name of English-
 men,
 And hospitably did they give us hail,
 As their forerunners in a glorious course ;
 And round and round the board we
 danced again.
 With these blithe friends our voyage we
 renewed
 At early dawn. The monastery bells

Made a sweet jingling in our youthful ears ;
 The rapid river flowing without noise,
 And each uprising or receding spire
 Spake with a sense of peace, at intervals
 Touching the hearts amid the boisterous crew
 By whom we were encompassed. Taking leave
 Of this glad throng, foot-travellers side by side,
 Measuring our steps in quiet, we pursued
 Our journey, and ere twice the sun had set
 Beheld the Convent of Chartreuse, and there
 Rested within an awful solitude :
 Yes ; for even then no other than a place
 Of soul-affecting solitude appeared
 That far-famed region, though our eyes
 Had seen,
 As toward the sacred mansion we advanced,
 Arms flashing, and a military glare
 Of riotous men commissioned to expel
 The blameless inmates, and belike subvert
 That frame of social being, which so long
 Had bodied forth the ghostliness of things
 In silence visible and perpetual calm.
 —“ Stay, stay your sacrilegious hands ! ”
 —The voice
 Was Nature's, uttered from her Alpine throne ;
 I heard it then and seem to hear it now—
 “ Your impious work forbear, perish what may,
 Let this one temple last, be this one spot
 Of earth devoted to eternity ! ”
 She ceased to speak, but while St. Bruno's pines
 Waved their dark tops, not silent as they waved,
 And while below, along their several beds,
 Murmured the sister streams of Life and Death,
 Thus by conflicting passions pressed, my heart [zeal !
 Responded ; “ Honour to the patriot's Glory and hope to new-born Liberty !
 Hail to the mighty projects of the time !
 Discerning sword that Justice wields, do thou
 Go forth and prosper ; and, ye purging fires,
 Up to the loftiest towers of Pride ascend,
 Fanned by the breath of angry Providence.
 But oh ! if Past and Future be the wings
 On whose support harmoniously conjoined
 Moves the great spirit of human knowledge, spare

These courts of mystery, where a step advanced
 Between the portals of the shadowy rocks
 Leaves far behind life's treacherous vanities,
 For penitential tears and trembling hopes
 Exchanged—to equalise in God's pure sight
 Monarch and peasant : be the house redeemed
 With its unworldly votaries, for the sake
 Of conquest over sense, hourly achieved
 Through faith and meditative reason, resting
 Upon the word of heaven-imparted truth,
 Calmly triumphant ; and for humbler claim
 Of that imaginative impulse sent
 From these majestic floods, yon stinging cliffs,
 The untransmuted shapes of many worlds,
 Cerulean ether's pure inhabitants,
 These forests unapproachable by death,
 That shall endure as long as man endures,
 To think, to hope, to worship, and to feel,
 To struggle, to be lost within himself
 In trepidation, from the blank abyss
 To look with bodily eyes, and be consoled.”
 Not seldom since that moment have I wished
 That thou, O Friend ! the trouble or the calm
 Hadst shared, when, from profane regards apart,
 In sympathetic reverence we trod
 The floors of those dim cloisters, till that hour,
 From their foundation, strangers to the presence
 Of unrestricted and unthinking man.
 Abroad, how cheerily the sunshine lay
 Upon the open lawns ! Vallombre's groves
 Entering, we fed the soul with darkness ; thence
 Issued, and with uplifted eyes, beheld,
 In different quarters of the bending sky,
 The cross of Jesus stand erect, as if
 Hands of angelic powers had fixed it there,
 Memorial revered by a thousand storms ;
 Yet then, from the indiscriminating sweep
 And rage of one State-whirlwind, insecure.
 'Tis not my present purpose to retrace
 That variegated journey step by step.
 A march it was of military speed,
 And Earth did change her images and forms

Before us, fast as clouds are changed in
heaven.

Day after day, up early and down late,
From hill to vale we dropped, from vale
to hill

Mounted—from province on to province
swept,

Keen hunters in a chase of fourteen weeks,
Eager as birds of prey, or as a ship

Upon the stretch, when winds are blow-
ing fair :

Sweet coverts did we cross of pastoral
life,

Enticing valleys, greeted them and left
Too soon, while yet the very flash and
gleam

Of salutation were not passed away.
Oh ! sorrow for the youth who could have
seen

Unchastened, unsubdued, unawed, un-
raised

To patriarchal dignity of mind,
And pure simplicity of wish and will,

Those sanctified abodes of peaceful man,
Pleased (though to hardship born, and
compassed round

With danger, varying as the seasons
change,)

Pleased with his daily task, or, if not
pleased,

Satisfied, from the moment that the
dawn

(Ah ! surely not without attendant gleams
Of soul-illumination) calls him forth

To industry, by glistenings flung on rocks,
Whose evening shadows lead him to re-
pose.

Well might a stranger look with bound-
ing heart

Down on a green recess, the first I saw
Of those deep haunts, an aboriginal vale.

Quiet and lorded over and possessed
By naked huts, wood-built, and sown
like tents

Or Indian cabins over the fresh lawns
And by the river side.

That very day,
From a bare ridge we also first beheld

Unveiled the summit of Mont Blanc, and
grieved

To have a soulless image on the eye
That had usurped upon a living thought,
That never more could be. The won-
drous Vale

Of Chamouny stretched far below, and
soon

With its dumb cataracts and streams of
ice,

A motionless array of mighty waves,
Five rivers broad and vast, made rich
amends,

And reconciled us to realities :

There small birds warble from the leafy
tress,

The eagle soars high in the element,
There doth the reaper bind the yellow
sheaf,

The maiden spread the haycock in the
sun, While Winter like A well-tamed lion
walks,

Descending from the mountain to make
sport

Among the cottages by beds of flowers.

Whate'er in this wide circuit we beheld,
Or heard, was fitted to our unripe state

Of intellect and heart. With such a
book

Before our eyes, we could not choose but
read

Lessons of genuine brotherhood, the plain
And universal reason of mankind,

The truths of young and old. Nor, side
by side

Pacing, two social pilgrims, or alone
Each with his humour, could we fail to
abound

In dreams and fictions, pensively com-
posed :

Dejection taken up for pleasure's sake,
And gilded sympathies, the willow wreath,

And sober posies of funereal flowers,
Gathered among those solitudes sublime

From formal gardens of the lady Sorrow,
Did sweeten many a meditative hour.

Yet still in me with those soft luxuries
Mixed something of stern mood, an under-
thirst

Of vigour seldom utterly allayed :

And from that source how different a sad-
ness

Would issue, let one incident make known.
When from the Vallais we had turned,
and clomb

Along the Simplon's steep and rugged
road,

Following a band of muleteers, we reached
A halting-place, where all together took
Their noon-tide meal. Hastily rose our
guide,

Leaving us at the board ; awhile we
lingered,

Then paced the beaten downward way
that led

Right to a rough stream's edge, and there
broke off ;

The only track now visible was one
That from the torrent's further brink
held forth

Conspicuous invitation to ascend
A lofty mountain. After brief delay

Crossing the unbridged stream, that road
we took,

And clomb with eagerness, till anxious
fears

Intruded, for we failed to overtake
 Our comrades gone before. By fortunate
 chance,
 While every moment added doubt to
 doubt,
 A peasant met us, from whose mouth we
 learned
 That to the spot which had perplexed us
 first
 We must descend, and there should find
 the road,
 Which in the stony channel of the stream
 Lay a few steps, and then along its banks;
 And, that our future course, all plain to
 sight,
 Was downwards, with the current of that
 stream.
 Loth to believe what we so grieved to
 hear,
 For still we had hopes that pointed to the
 clouds,
 We questioned him again, and yet again,
 But every word that from the peasant's
 lips
 Came in reply, translated by our feelings,
 Ended in this,—*that we had crossed the
 Alps.*

Imagination—here the Power so-called
 Through sad incompetence of human
 speech,
 That awful Power rose from the mind's
 abyss
 Like an unfathered vapour that enwraps,
 At once, some lonely traveller. I was
 lost;
 Halted without an effort to break through;
 But to my conscious soul I now can say—
 "I recognise thy glory:" in such
 strength
 Of usurpation, when the light of sense
 Goes out, but with a flash that has re-
 vealed
 The invisible world, doth greatness make
 abode,
 There harbours; whether we be young
 or old,
 Our destiny, our being's heart and home,
 Is with infinitude, and only there;
 With hope it is, hope that can never die,
 Effort, and expectation, and desire,
 And something evermore about to be.
 Under such banners militant, the soul
 Seeks for no trophies, struggles for no
 spoils
 That may attest her prowess, blest in
 thoughts [ward,
 That are their own perfection and re-
 Strong in herself and in beatitude
 That hides her, like the mighty flood of
 Nile [clouds
 Poured from his fount of Abyssinian
 To fertilise the whole Egyptian plain.

The melancholy slackening that ensued
 Upon those tidings by the peasant given
 Was soon dislodged. Downwards we
 hurried fast,
 And, with the half-shaped road which
 we had missed,
 Entered a narrow chasm. The brook
 and road
 Were fellow-travellers in this gloomy
 strait,
 And with them did we journey several
 hours
 At a slow pace. The immeasurable
 height
 Of woods decaying, never to be decayed,
 The stationary blasts of waterfalls,
 And in the narrow rent at every turn
 Winds thwarting winds, bewildered and
 forlorn,
 The torrents shooting from the clear blue
 sky,
 The rocks that muttered close upon our
 ears,
 Black drizzling crags that spake by the
 way-side
 As if a voice were in them, the sick-
 sight
 And giddy prospect of the raving stream,
 The unfettered clouds and region of the
 Heavens,
 Tumult and peace, the darkness and the
 light—
 Were all like workings of one mind, the
 features
 Of the same face, blossoms upon one tree;
 Characters of the great Apocalypse,
 The types and symbols of Eternity,
 Of first, and last, and midst, and without
 end.

That night our lodging was a house
 that stood
 Alone within the valley, at a point
 Where, tumbling from aloft, a torrent
 swelled
 The rapid stream whose margin we had
 trod;
 A dreary mansion, large beyond all need,
 With high and spacious rooms, deafened
 and stunned
 By noise of waters, making innocent sleep
 Lie melancholy among weary bones.
 Uprisen betimes, our journey we re-
 newed,
 Led by the stream, ere noon-day mag-
 nified
 Into a lordly river, broad and deep,
 Dimpling along in sileat majesty,
 With mountains for its neighbours, and
 in view
 Of distant mountains and their snowy
 tops,

And thus proceeding to Locarno's Lake,
Fit resting-place for such a visitant.
Locarno! spreading out in width, like
Heaven,

How dost thou cleave to the poetic heart,
Bask in the sunshine of the memory;
And Como! thou, a treasure whom the
earth

Keeps to herself, confined as in a depth
Of Abyssinian privacy. I spake
Of thee, thy chestnut woods, and garden
plots

Of Indian corn tended by dark-eyed
maids;

Thy lofty steep, and pathways roofed
with vines,

Winding from house to house, from town
to town,

Sole link that binds them to each other;
walks,

League after league, and cloistral avenues,
Where silence dwells if music be not there:
While yet a youth undisciplined in verse,
Through fond ambition of that hour I
strove

To claim your praise; nor can approach
you now

Ungreeted by a more melodious Song,
Where tones of Nature smoothed by
learned Art

May flow in lasting current. Like a
breeze

Or sunbeam over your domain I passed
In motion without pause; but ye have
left

Your beauty with me, a serene accord
Of form and colours, passive, yet en-
dowed

In their submissiveness with power as
sweet

And gracious, almost might I dare to say,
As virtue is, or goodness; sweet as love,
Or the remembrance of a generous deed.
Or mildest visitations of pure thought,
When God, the giver of all joy, is thanked
Religiously, in silent blessedness:
Sweet as this last herself, for such it is.

With those delightful pathways we
advanced,

For two days' space, in presence of the
Lake,

That, stretching far among the Alps,
assumed

A character more stern. The second
night,

From sleep awakened, and misled by
sound

Of the church clock telling the hours with
strokes

Whose import then we had not learned,
we rose

By moonlight, doubting not that day was

And that meanwhile, by no uncertain
path,

Along the winding margin of the lake,
Led, as before, we should behold the
scene

Hushed in profound repose. We left
the town

Of Gravedona with this hope; but soon
We're lost, bewildered among woods im-
mense,

And on a rock sate down, to wait for day.
An open place it was, and overlooked,

From high, the sullen water far beneath,
On which a dull red image of the moon

Lay bedded, changing oftentimes its form
Like an uneasy snake. From hour to

hour
We sate and sate, wondering, as if the
night

Had been ensnared by witchcraft. On
the rock

At last we stretched our weary limbs for
sleep,

But could not sleep, tormented by the
stings

Of insects, which, with noise like that of
noon,

Filled all the woods: the cry of unknown
birds:

The mountains more by blackness
visible

And their own size, than any outward
light;

The breathless wilderness of clouds; the
clock

That told, with unintelligible voice,
The widely parted hours; the noise of

streams,
And sometimes rustling motions nigh at

hand,
That did not leave us free from personal

fear:
And, lastly, the withdrawing moon, that

set
Before us, while she still was high in

heaven;—
These were our food; and such a sum-
mer's night

Followed that pair of golden days that shed
On Como's Lake, and all that round it

lay,
Their fairest, softest, happiest influence.

But here I must break off, and bid fare-
well

To days, each offering some new sight, or
fraught

With some untried adventure, in a course
Prolonged till sprinklings of autumnal

snow
Checked our unwearied steps. Let this

alone
Be mentioned as a parting word, that not

In hollow exultation, dealing out
Hyperboles of praise comparative ;
Not rich one moment to be poor for ever ;
Not prostrate, overborne, as if the mind
Herself were nothing, a mere pensioner
On outward forms—did we in presence
stand
Of that magnificent region. Oh the
front
Of this whole Song is written that my
heart
Must, in such Temple, needs have offered
A different worship. Finally, whatever
I saw, or heard, or felt, was but a stream
That flowed into a kindred stream : a
gale.
Confederate with the current of the soul,
To speed my voyage ; every sound or
sight,
In its degree of power, administered
To grandeur or to tenderness,—to the
one
Directly, but to tender thoughts by
means
Less often instantaneous in effect :
Led me to these by paths that, in the
main,
Were more circuitous, but not less sure
Duly to reach the point marked out by
Heaven.

Oh, most beloved Friend ! a glorious
time,
A happy time that was ; triumphant
looks

Were then the common language of all
eyes ;
As if awaked from sleep, the Nations
hailed
Their great expectancy : the life of war
Was then a spirit-stirring sound indeed,
A blackbird's whistle in a budding grove.
We left the Swiss exulting in the fate
Of their near neighbours ; and, when
shortening fast
Our pilgrimage, nor distant far from
home,
We crossed the Brabant armies on the
fret
For battle in the cause of Liberty.
A stripping scarcely of the household
then
Of social life, I looked upon these things
As from a distance ; heard, and saw,
and felt,
Was touched, but with no intimate con-
cern ;
I seemed to move along them, as a bird
Moves through the air, or as a fish pur-
sues
Its sport, or feeds in its proper element ;
I wanted not that joy, I did not need
Such help ; the ever-living universe.
Turn where I might, was opening out its
glories,
And the independent spirit of pure youth,
Called forth, at every season, new de-
lights
Spread round my steps like sunshine o'er
green fields.

BOOK SEVENTH

RESIDENCE IN LONDON

Six changeful years have vanished since I
first
Poured out (saluted by that quickening
breeze
Which met me issuing from the City's
walls)
A glad preamble to this Verse : I sang
Aloud, with fervour irresistible
Of short-lived transport, like a torrent
bursting,
From a black thunder-cloud, down
Scafell's side
To rush and disappear. But soon broke
forth
(So willed the Muse) a less impetuous
stream,
That flowed awhile with unabating
strength,
Then stopped for years ; not audible again
Before last primrose-time. Belovèd
Friend !

1 The City of Goslar, in Lower Saxony.—Ed.

The assurance which then cheered some
heavy thoughts
On thy departure to a foreign land
Has failed ; too slowly moves the pro-
mised work.
Through the whole summer have I been
at rest,
Partly from voluntary holiday,
And part through outward hindrance.
But I heard,
After the hour of sunset yester-even,
Sitting within doors between light and
dark,
A choir of red-breasts gathered some-
where near
My threshold,—minstrels from the dis-
tant woods
Sent in on Winter's service, to announce,
With preparation artful and benign,
That the rough lord had left the surly
North
On his accustomed journey. The de-
light,
Due to this timely notice, unawares

Smote me, and, listening, I in whispers said,

"Ye heartsome Choristers, ye and I will be

Associates, and, unscared by blustering winds,

Will chant together." Thereafter, as the shades

Of twilight deepened, going forth, I spied A glow-worm underneath a dusky plume

Or canopy of yet unwithered fern. Clear-shining, like a hermit's taper seen

Through a thick forest, Silence touched me here

No less than sound had done before; the child

Of Summer, lingering, shining, by herself,

The voiceless worm on the unfrequented hills,

Seemed sent on the same errand with the choir

Of Winter that had warbled at thy door, And the whole year breathed tenderness

and love.

The last night's genial feeling overflowed

Upon the morning, and my favourite grove,

Tossing in sunshine its dark boughs aloft,

As if to make the strong wind visible, Wakes in me agitations like its own,

A spirit friendly to the Poet's task, Which we will now resume with lively hope,

Nor checked by aught of tamer argument That lies before us, needful to be told.

Returned from that excursion,¹ soon I bade

Farewell for ever to the sheltered seats Of gowned students, quitted hall and bower,

And every comfort of that privileged ground.

Well pleased to pitch a vagrant tent among

The unfenced regions of society.

Yet, undetermined to what course of life

I should adhere, and seeming to possess, A little space of intermediate time

At full command, to London first I turned,

In no disturbance of excessive hope, By personal ambition unenslaved,

Frugal as there was need, and, though self-willed,

From dangerous passions free. Three years had flown

Since I had felt in heart and soul the shock

Of the huge town's first presence, and had paced

Her endless streets, a transient vistant: Now, fixed amid that concourse of mankind

Where pleasure whirled about incessantly, As if life and labour seem but one, I filled

An idler's place; an idler well content To have a house (what matter for a home?)

That owned him; living cheerfully abroad

With unchecked fancy ever on the stir, And all my young affections out of doors.

There was a time when whatsoever is feigned

Of airy palaces, and gardens built By Genii of romance; or hath in grave

Authentic history been set forth of Rome, Alcairo, Babylon, or Persepolis;

Or given upon report by pilgrim friars, Of golden cities ten months' journey deep

Among Tartarian wilds—fell short, far short.

Of what my fond simplicity believed And thought of London—held me by a chain

Less strong of wonder and obscure delight.

Whether the bolt of childhood's Fancy shot

For me beyond its ordinary mark, 'Twere vain to ask; but in our flock of boys

Was One, a cripple from his birth, whom chance

Summoned from school to London; fortunate

And envied traveller! When the Boy returned,

After short absence, curiously I scanned His mien and person, nor was free, in sooth,

From disappointment, not to find some change

In look and air, from that new region brought,

As if from Fairy-land. Much I questioned him;

And every word he uttered, on my ears Fell flatter than a caged parrot's note,

That answers unexpectedly awry, And mocks the prompter's listening.

Marvellous things

Had vanity (quick Spirit that appears Almost as deeply seated and as strong—

In a Child's heart as fear itself) conceived For my enjoyment. Would that I could now

Recal what than I pictured to myself, Of mitred Prelates, Lords in ermine clad,

¹ See p. 504.—Ed.

The King, and the King's Palace, and,
not last,
Nor least, Heaven bless him! the re-
nowned Lord Mayor:

Dreams not unlike to those which once
begat

A change of purpose in young Whitting-
ton,

When he, a friendless and a drooping boy,
Sate on a stone, and heard the bells speak
out

Articulate music. Above all, one thought
Baffled my understanding: how new
lived

Even next-door neighbours, as we say,
yet still

Strangers, not knowing each the other's

O, wond'rous power of words, by simple
faith

Licensed to take the meaning that we
love!

Vauxhall and Ranelagh! I then had
heard

Of your green groves, and wilderness of
lamps

Dimming the stars, and fireworks magi-
cal,

And gorgeous ladies, under splendid
domes,

Floating in dance, or warbling high in air
The songs of spirits! Nor had Fancy fed

With less delight upon that other class
Of marvels, broad-day wonders per-
manent:

The River proudly bridged; the dizzy
top

And Whispering Gallery of St. Paul's;
the tombs

Of Westminster; the Giants of Guild-
hall;

Bedlam, and those carved maniacs at
the gates,

Perpetually recumbent; Statues—man-
and the horse under him—in gild'd

pomp
Adorning flowery gardens, 'mid vast
squares;

The Monument, and that Chamber of
the Tower

Where England's sovereigns sit in long
array,

Their steeds bestriding,—every mimic
shape

Cased in the gleaming mail the monarch
wore,

Whether for gorgeous tournament ad-
dressed,

Or life or death upon the battle-field.
Those bold imaginations in due time

Had vanished, leaving others in their
stead:

And now I looked upon the living scene
Familiarly perused it; oftentimes,

In spite of strongest disappointment,
pleased,

Through courteous self-submission, as a
tax

Paid to the object by prescriptive right.

Rise up, thou monstrous ant-hill on the
plain

Of a too busy world! Before me flow,
Thou endless stream of men and moving
things!

Thy every-day appearance, as it strikes—
With wonder heightened, or subdued by
awe—

On strangers, of all ages; the quick dance
Of colour, lights, and forms; the dawning
ing din;

The comers and the goers face to face,
Face after face; the string of dazzlin-
g wars,

Shop after shop, with symbols, blazoned
names,

And all the tradesman's honours over-
head:

Here, fronts of houses, like a title-page,
With letters huge inscribed from top
to toe,

Stationed above the door, like guardian
saints;

There, allegoric shapes, female or male,
Or physiognomies of real men,

Land-warriors, kings, or admirals of the
sea,

Boyle, Shakspeare, Newton, or the at-
tractive head

Of some quack-doctor, famous in his day.

Meanwhile the roar continues, till at
length,

Escaped as from an enemy, we turn
Abruptly into some sequestered nook,

Still as a sheltered place when winds blow
loud!

At leisure, thence, through tracts of thin
resort,

And sights and sounds that come at
intervals,

We take our way. A raree-show is here,
With children gathered round; another
street

Presents a company of dancing dogs,
Or dromedary, with an antic pair

Of monkeys on his back; a minstrel
band

Of Savoyards; or, single and alone,
An English ballad-singer. Private courts,
Gloomy as coffins, and unsightly lanes

Thrilled by some female vendor's scream,
belike

The very shrillest of all London cries,
May then entangle our impatient steps:

Conducted through those labyrinths,
unawares,
To privileged regions and inviolate,
Where from their airy lodges studious
lawyers
Look out on waters, walks, and gardens
green.

Thence back into the throng, until we
reach,
Following the tide that slackens by
degrees,
Some half-frequented scene, where wider
streets
Bring straggling breezes of suburban air.
Here files of ballads dangle from dead
walls:

Advertisements, of giant-size, from high
Pres, forward, in all colours, on the sight:
These, bold in conscious merit, lower
down;

That, fronted with a most imposing word,
Is, peradventure, one in masquerade.
As on the broadening causeway we
advance,
Behold, turned upwards, a face hard and
strong

In lineaments, and red with over-toil.
'Tis one encountered here and everywhere:
A travelling cripple, by the trunk cut
short.

And stumping on his arms. In sailor's
garb

Another lies at length, beside a range
Of well-formed characters, with chalk
inscribed

Upon the smooth flat stones: the Nurse
is here,

The Bachelor, that loves to sun himself,
The military Idler, and the Dame,
That field-ward takes her walk with
decent steps.

Now homeward through the thickening
hubbub, where

See, among less distinguishable shapes,
The begging scavenger, with hat in hand:
The Italian, as he thrills his way with
care,

Steadying, far-seen, a frame of images
Upon his head; with basket at his
breast

The Jew: the stately and slow-moving
Turk,

With freight of slippers piled beneath his
arm!

Enough;—the mighty concourse I
surveyed
With no unthinking mind, well pleased
to note

Among the crowd all specimens of man,
Through all the colours which the sun
bestows,

W.P.

And every character of form and face:
The Swede, the Russian; from the genial
south,

The Frenchman and the Spaniard; from
remote

America, the Hunter-Indian; Moors,
Malays, Lascars, the Tartar, the Chinese,
And Negro Ladies in white muslin gowns

At leisure, then, I viewed, from day
to day,

The spectacles within doors,—birds and
beasts

Of every nature, and strange plants con-
vened

From every clime: and, next, those
sights that ape

The absolute presence of reality,
Expressing, as in mirror, sea and land,
And what earth is, and what she has to
show.

I do not here allude to subtlest craft,
By means refined attaining purest ends,
But imitations, fondly made in plain
Confession of man's weakness and his
loves.

Whether the Painter, whose ambitious
skill

Submits to nothing less than taking in
A whole horizon's circuit, do with power,
Like that of angels or commissioned
spirits,

Fix us upon some lofty pinnacle,

Or in a ship on waters, with a world
Of life, and life-like mockery beneath,

Above, behind, far stretching and before;
Or more mechanic artist represent

By scale exact, in model, wood or clay,
From blended colours also borrowing
help,

Some miniature of famous spots or
things,—

St. Peter's Church: or, more aspiring aim,
In microscopic vision, Rome herself:

Or, haply, some choice rural haunt,—the
Falls

(Of Tivoli: and, high upon that steep,
The Sibyl's mouldering Temple! every
tree,

Villa, or cottage, lurking among rocks
Throughout the landscape; turf, stone-
scratch minute—

All that the traveller sees when he is
there.

Add to these exhibitions, mute and still,
Others of wider scope, where living men,
Music, and shifting pantomimic scenes,
Diversified the allurements. Need I fear
To mention by its name, as in degree,
Lowest of these and humblest in attempt,
Yet richly graced with honours of her
own.

L.L.

Half-rural Sadler's Wells? Though at
 that time
 Intolerant, as is the way of youth
 Unless itself be pleased, here more than
 once
 Taking my seat, I saw (nor blush to add,
 With ample recompense) giants and
 dwarfs,
 Clowns, conjurers, pasture-masters, har-
 lequins,
 Amid the uproar of the rabblement,
 Perform their feats. Nor was it mean
 delight
 To watch crude Nature work in untaught
 minds;
 To note the laws and progress of belief;
 Though obstinate on this way, yet on that
 How willingly we travel, and how far!
 To have, for instance, brought upon the
 scene
 The champion, Jack the Giant-killer:
 Lo!
 He dons his coat of darkness: on the
 stage
 Walks, and achieves his wonders, from
 the eye
 Of living Mortal covert, "as the moon
 Hid in her vacant interlunar cave."
 Delusion bold! and how can it be
 wrought?
 The garb he wears is black as death, the
 word
 "Invisible" flames forth upon his chest.

 Here, too, were "forms and pressures
 of the time,"
 Rough, bold, as Grecian comedy dis-
 played
 When Art was young; dramas of living
 men,
 And recent things yet warm with life,
 a sea-fight,
 Shipwreck, or some domestic incident
 Divulged by Truth and magnified by
 Fame;
 Such as the daring brotherhood of late
 Set forth, too serious theme for that light
 place—
 I mean, O distant Friend! a story drawn
 From our own ground,—the Maid of
 Buttermere,—
 And how, unfaithful to a virtuous wife
 Deserted and deceived, the Spoiler came,
 And wooed the artless daughter of the
 hills,
 And wedded her, in cruel mockery
 Of love and marriage bonds. These
 words to thee
 Must needs bring back the moment when
 we first,
 Ere the broad world rang with the
 maiden's name,
 Beheld her serving at the cottage inn;

Both stricken, as she entered or withdrew,
 With admiration of her modest mien
 And carriage, marked by unexampled
 grace.

We since that time not unfamiliar
 Have seen her,—her discretion have ob-
 served,

Her just opinions, delicate reserve,
 Her patience, and humility of mind
 Unspoiled by commendation and the
 excess

Of public notice—an offensive light
 To a meek spirit suffering inwardly.

From this memorial tribute to my
 theme

I was returning, when, with sundry
 forms

Commingled—shapes which met me in
 the way

That we must tread—thy image rose
 again,

Maiden of Buttermere? She lives in
 peace

Upon the spot where she was born and
 reared;

Without contamination, doth she live
 In quietness, without anxiety:

Beside the mountain chapel, sleeps in
 earth

Her new-born infant, fearless as a lamb,
 That, thither driven from some unshel-
 tered place,

Rests underneath the little rock-like pile
 When storms are raging. Happy are
 they both—

Mother and child!—These feelings, in
 themselves

Trite, do yet scarcely seem so when I
 think

On those ingenuous moments of our
 youth

Ere we have learnt by use to slight the
 crimes

And sorrows of the world. Those simple
 days

Are now my theme; and, foremost of
 the scenes,

Which yet survive in memory, appears
 One, at whose centre sate a lovely Boy,

A sportive infant, who, for six months'
 space,

Not more, had been of age to deal about
 Articulate prattle—Child as beautiful

As ever clung around a mother's neck,
 Or father fondly gazed upon with pride.

There, too, conspicuous for stature tall
 And large dark eyes, beside her infant

stood
 The mother; but, upon her cheeks

diffused,
 False tints too well accorded with the
 glare

From play-house lustres thrown without
reserve

On every object near. The Boy had
been

The pride and pleasure of all lookers-on
In whatsoever place, but seemed in this
A sort of alien scattered from the clouds.
Of lusty vigour, more than infantine
He was in limb, in cheek a summer rose
Just three parts blown—a cottage-child
—if e'er,

By cottage-door on breezy mountain side,
Or in some sheltering vale, was seen a
babe

By Nature's gift so favoured. Upon a
board

Decked with refreshments had this child
been placed,

His little stage in the vast theatre,
And there he sate surrounded with a
throng

Of chance spectators, chiefly dissolute
men

And shaming women, treated and
caressed:

Ate, drank, and with the fruit and glasses
played,

While oaths and laughter and indecent
speech

Were rife about him as the songs of birds
contending after showers. The mother
now

Is fading out of memory, but I see
The lovely Boy as I beheld him then

Among the wretched and the falsely gay,
Like one of those who walked with hair
unsunged

Amid the fiery furnace. Charms and
spells

Muttered on black and spiteful instiga-
tion

Have stopped, as some believe, the
kindest growths.

Ah, with how different spirit might a
prayer

Have been preferred, that this fair
creature, checked

By special privilege of Nature's love,
Should in his childhood be detained for
ever!

But with its universal freight the tide
Hath rolled along, and this bright inno-
cent,

Mary! may now have lived till he could
look

With envy on thy nameless babe that
sleeps,

Beside the mountain chapel, undisturbed.

Four rapid years had scarcely then
been told

Since, travelling southward from our
pastoral hills,

I heard, and for the first time in my life,
The voice of woman utter blasphemy—

Saw woman as she is, to open shame
Abandoned, and the pride of public vice;

I shuddered, for a barrier seemed at once
Thrown in that from humanity divorced

Humanity, splitting the race of man
In twain, yet leaving the same outward
form.

Distress of mind ensued upon the sight,
And ardent meditation. Later years

Brought to such spectacle a milder sad-
ness,

Feelings of pure commiseration, grief
For the individual and the overthrow

Of her soul's beauty: farther I was then
But seldom led, or wished to go: in truth

The sorrow of the passion stopped me
there.

But let me now, less moved, in order
take

Our argument. Enough is said to show
How casual incidents of real life,

Observed where pastime only had been
sought,

Outweighed, or put to flight, the set events
And measured passions of the stage,

albeit

By Siddons trod in the fulness of her
power.

Yet was the theatre my dear delight:
The very gilding, lamps and painted
scrolls,

And all the mean upholstery of the place,
Wanted not animation, when the tide

Of pleasure ebbed but to return as fast
With the ever-shifting figures of the scene,

Solemn or gay: whether some beauteous
dame

Advanced in radiance through a deep
recess

Of thick entangled forest, like the moon
Opening the clouds: or sovereign king,

announced

With flourishing trumpet, came in full-
blown state

Of the world's greatness, winding round
with train

Of courtiers, banners, and a length of
guards:

Or captive led in abject weeds, and jing-
ling

His slender manacles; or romping girl
Bounced, leapt, and pawed the air; or

mumbling sire, [up
A scare-crow pattern of old age dressed

In all the tatters of infirmity
All loosely put together, hobbled in,

Stumping upon a cane with which he
smites,

From time to time, the solid boards, and
makes them

Prate somewhat loudly of the whereabout
Of one so overloaded with his years.
But what of this! the laugh, the grin,
grimace,

The antics striving to outstrip each other,
Were all received, the least of them not
lost,

With an unmeasured welcome. Through
the night,
Between the show, and many-headed

Of the spectators, and each several nook
Filled with its fray or brawl, how eagerly
And with what flashes, as it were, the
mind

Turned this way—that way! sportive and
alert

And watchful, as a kitten when at play,
While winds are eddying round her,
among straws

And rustling leaves. Enchanting age
and sweet!

Romantic almost, looked at through a
space,

How small, of intervening years! For
then,

Though surely no mean progress had
been made

In meditations holy and sublime,
Yet something of a girlish child-like
gloss

Of novelty survived for scenes like these;
Enjoyment haply handed down from
times

When at a country-playhouse, some rude
barn

Tricked out for that proud use, if I per-
chance

Caught, on a summer evening through a
chink

In the old wall, an unexpected glimpse
Of daylight, the bare thought of where I
was

Gladdened me more than if I had been
led

Into a dazzling cavern of romance,
Crowded with Genii busy among works
Not to be looked at by the common sun.

The matter that detains us now may
seem,

To many, neither dignified enough
Nor arduous, yet will not be scorned by
them,

Who, looking inward, have observed the
ties

That bind the perishable hours of life
Each to the other, and the curious props
By which the world of memory and
thought

Exists and is sustained. More lofty
themes,

Such as at least do wear a prouder face,

Solicit our regard; but when I think
Of these, I feel the imaginative power
Languish within me; even then it slept,
When, pressed by tragic sufferings, the
heart

Was more than full; amid my sobs and
tears

It slept, even in the pregnant season of
youth.

For though I was most passionately
moved

And yielded to all changes of the scene
With an obsequious promptness, yet the
storm

Passed not beyond the suburbs of the
mind;

Save when realities of act and sign,
The incarnation of the spirits that move

In harmony amid the Poet's world,
Rose to ideal grandeur, or, called forth

By power of contrast, made me recognise,
As at a glance, the things which I had
shaped,

And yet not shaped, had seen and scarcely
seen,

When, having closed the mighty Shak-
speare's page,

I mused, and thought; and felt, in soli-
tude.

Pass we from entertainments, that age
such

Professedly, to others titled higher,
Yet, in the estimate of youth at least,

More near akin to those than na-
imply,—

I mean the brawls of lawyers in their
courts

Before the ermined judge, or that great
stage

Where senators, tongue-favoured men,
perform,

Admired and envied. Oh! the beating
heart,

When one among the prime of these rose
up,—

One, of whose name from childhood we
had heard

Familiarly, a household term, like those,
The Bedfords, Glosters, Salsburys, of old

Whom the fifth Harry talks of. Silence!
hush!

This is no trifle, no short-flighted wit,
No stammerer of a minute, painfully

Delivered. No! the Orator hath yoked
The Hours, like young Aurora, to his car:

Thrice welcome Presence! how can
patience e'er

Grow weary of attending on a track
That kindles with such glory! All are
charmed,

Astonished; like a hero in romance,
He winds away his never-ending horn;

Words follow words, sense seems to follow sense :

What memory and what logic ! till the strain

Transcendent, superhuman as it seemed,
Grows tedious even in a young man's ear.

Genius of Burke ! forgive the pen
seduced

By specious wonders, and too slow to tell
Of what the ingenuous, what bewildered

men,
Beginning to • mistrust • their boastful

guides,
And wise men, willing to grow wiser,

caught,
Rapt auditors ! from thy most eloquent

tongue—
Now mute, for ever mute in the cold

grave.
I see him,—old, but vigorous in age,—

Stand like an oak whose stag-horn
branches start

Out of its leafy brow, the more to awe
The younger brethren of the grove. But

some—
While he forewarns, denounces, launches

forth, [rights,
Against all systems built on abstract

Keen ridicule ; the majesty proclaims
Of Institutes and Laws, hallowed by

time ;
Declares the vital power of social ties

Endeared by Custom ; and with high
disdain.

Exploding upstart Theory, insists
Upon the allegiance to which men are

born—
Some—say at once a froward multitude—

Murmur (for truth is hated, where not
loved)

As the winds fret within the Æolian cave,
Galled by their monarch's chain. The

times were big
• With ominous change, which, night by

night, provoked
Keen struggles, and black clouds of

passion raised ;
But memorable moments intervened,

When Wisdom, like the Goddess from
Jove's brain,

Broke forth in armour of resplendent
words,

Startling the Synod. Could a youth,
and one

In ancient story versed, whose breast had
heaved

Under the weight of classic eloquence,
Sit, see, and hear, unthankful, uninspired ?

Nor did the Pulpit's oratory fail
To achieve its higher triumph. Not un-

felt

Were its admonishments, nor lightly
heard

The awful truths delivered thence by
tongues

Endowed with various power to search
the soul :

Yet ostentation, domineering, oft
Poured forth harangues, how sadly out

of place !—
There have I seen a comely bachelor,

Fresh from a toilette of two hours,
ascend [up,

His rostrum, with graphic glance look
And, in a tone elaborately low

beginning, lead his voice through many
a maze

A minuet course ; and, winding up his
mouth,

From time to time, into an orifice
Most delicate, a lurking eyelet, small,

And only not invisible, again
Open it out, diffusing thence a smile

Of rapt irradiation, exquisite.
Meanwhile the Evangelists, Isaiah, Job,

Moses, and he who penned, the other day,
The Death of Abel, Shakspeare, and the

Bard
Whose genius spangled o'er a gloomy

theme
With fancies thick as his inspiring stars,

And Ossian (doubt not—'tis the naked
truth)

Summoned from streamy Morven—each
and all

Would, in their turns, lend ornaments
and flowers

To entwine the crook of eloquence that
helped

This pretty Shepherd, pride of all the
plains,

To rule and guide his captivated flock.

I glance but at a few conspicuous marks,
Leaving a thousand others, that, in hall,

Court, theatre, conventicle, or shop,
In public room or private, park or street,

Each fondly reared on his own pedestal,
Looked out for admiration. Folly, vice,

Extravagance in gesture, mien, and dress,
And all the strife of singularity,

Lies to the ear, and lies to every sense—
Of these, and of the living shapes they

wear,
There is no end. Such candidates for

regard,
Although well pleased to be where they

were found,
I did not hunt after, nor greatly prize,

Nor made unto myself a secret boast
Of reading them with quick and curious

eye ;

But, as a common produce, things that
are

To-day, to-morrow will be, took of them
 Such willing note, as, on some errand
 bound
 That asks not speed, a traveller might be-
 stow
 On sea-shells that bestrew the sandy
 beach,
 Or daisies swarming through the fields of
 June.
 But foolishness and madness in parade,
 Though most at home in this their dear
 domain,
 Are scattered everywhere, no rarities.
 Even to the rudest novice of the Schools.
 Me, rather, it employed, to note, and keep
 In memory, those individual sights
 Of courage, or integrity, or truth,
 Or tenderness, which there, set off by foil,
 Appeared more touching. One will I
 select:
 A Father—for he bore that sacred name—
 Him saw I, sitting in an open square,
 Upon a corner-stone of that low wall,
 Wherein were fixed the iron pales that
 fenced
 A spacious grass-plot: there, in silence,
 sat
 This One Man, with a sickly babe out-
 stretched
 Upon his knee, whom he had thither
 brought
 For sunshine, and to breathe the fresher
 air.
 Of those who passed, and me who looked
 at him,
 He took no heed; but in his brawny arms
 (The Artificer was to the elbow bare,
 And from his work this moment had been
 stolen)
 He held the child, and, bending over it,
 As if he were afraid both of the sun
 And of the air, which he had come to seek,
 Eyed the poor babe with love unutterable.
 As the black storm upon the mountain
 top
 Sets off the sunbeam in the valley, so
 That huge fermenting mass of human-
 kind
 Serves as a solemn back-ground, or relief,
 To single forms and objects, whence they
 draw,
 For feeling and contemplative regard,
 More than inherent liveliness and power.
 How oft, amid those overflowing streets,
 Have I gone forward with the crowd, and
 said
 Unto myself, "The face of every one
 That passes by me is a mystery!"
 Thus have I looked, nor ceased to look,
 oppressed
 By thoughts of what and whither, when
 and how,

Until the shapes before my eyes became
 A second-sight procession, such as glides
 Over still mountains, or appears in
 dreams;
 And once, far-travelled in such mood,
 beyond
 The reach of common indication, lost
 Amid the moving pageant, I was smitten
 Abruptly, with the view (a sight not rare)
 Of a blind Beggar, who, with upright face,
 Stood, propped against a wall, upon his
 chest
 Wearing a written paper, to explain
 His story, whence he came, and who he
 was.
 Caught by the spectacle my mind turned
 round
 As with the might of waters; and apt
 type
 This label seemed of the utmost we can
 know,
 Both of ourselves and of the universe;
 And, on the shape of that unmoving man,
 His steadfast face and sightless eyes, I
 gazed,
 As if admonished from another world.
 Though reared upon the base of out-
 ward things,
 Structures like these the excited spirit
 mainly
 Builds for herself: scenes different there
 are,
 Full-formed, that take, with small inter-
 nal help,
 Possession of the faculties,—the peace
 That comes with night; the deep solemn-
 ity
 Of nature's intermediate hours of rest,
 When the great tide of human life stands
 still;
 The business of the day to come, unborn,
 Of that gone by, locked up, as in the
 grave;
 The blended calmness of the heavens and
 Moonlight and stars, and empty streets,
 and sounds,
 Unfrequent as in deserts; at late hours
 Of winter evenings, when unwholesome
 rains
 Are falling hard, with people yet astir,
 The feeble salutation from the voice
 Of some unhappy woman, now and then
 Heard as we pass, when no one looks
 about,
 Nothing is listened to. But these, I fear,
 Are falsely catalogued; things that are,
 are not,
 As the mind answers to them, or the heart
 Is prompt, or slow, to feel. What say
 you, then,
 To times, when half the city shall break
 out

Full of one passion, vengeance, rage, or
 fear ?
 To executions, to a street on fire.
 Mobs, riots, or rejoicings ? • From these
 sights
 Take one,—that ancient festival, the
 Fair,
 Holden where martyrs suffered in past
 time,
 And named of St. Bartholomew ; there,
 see
 A work completed to our hands, that lays,
 If any spectacle on earth can do,
 The whole creative powers of man
 asleep !—
 For once, the Muse's help will we implore.
 And she shall lodge us, waited on her
 wings,
 Above the press and danger of the crowd,
 Upon some showman's platform. What
 a shock
 For eyes and ears ! what anarchy and
 din,
 Barbarian and infernal,—a phantasma,
 Monstrous in colour, motion, shape, sight,
 sound !
 Below, the open space, through every
 nook
 Of the wide area, twinkles, is alive
 With heads ; the midway region, and
 above,
 Is thronged with staring pictures and
 huge scrolls,
 Dumb proclamations of the Prodigies :
 With chattering monkeys dangling from
 their poles,
 And children whirling in their round-
 abouts :
 With those that stretch the neck and
 strain the eyes,
 And crack the voice in rivalry, the
 crowd
 Inviting ; with buffoons against buffoons
 Grimacing, writhing, screaming,—him
 who grinds
 The hurdy-gurdy, at the fiddle weaves,
 Rattles the salt-box, thumps the kettle-
 drum,
 And him who at the trumpet puffs his
 cheeks,
 The silver-collared Negro with his timbrel,
 Equestrians, tumblers, women, girls, and
 boys,
 Blue-breeched, pink-vested, with high-
 towering plumes.—
 All moveables of wonder, from all parts,
 Are here—Albinos, painted Indians,
 Dwarfs,
 The Horse of knowledge, and the learned
 Pig,
 The Stone-eater, the man that swallows
 fire,
 Giants, Ventriloquists, the Invisible Girl,
 The Bust that speaks and moves its
 goggling eyes.
 The Wax-work, Clock-work, all the mar-
 vellous craft
 Of modern Merlins, Wild Beasts, Puppet-
 shows,
 All out-o'-the-way, far-fetched, perverted
 things,
 All freaks of nature, all Promethean
 thoughts
 Of man, his dullness, madness, and their
 feats
 All jumbled up together, to compose
 A Parliament of Monsters. Tents and
 Booths
 Meanwhile, as if the whole were one vast
 mill,
 Are vomiting, receiving on all sides,
 Men, Women, three-years' Children,
 Babes in arms.
 Oh, blank confusion ! true epitome
 Of what the mighty City is herself,
 To thousands upon thousands of her sons,
 Living amid the same perpetual whirl
 Of trivial objects, melted and reduced
 To one identity, by differences
 That have no law, no meaning, and no
 end—
 Oppression, under which even highest
 minds
 Must labour, whence the strongest are
 not free.
 But though the picture weary out the eye,
 By nature an unmanageable sight,
 It is not wholly so to him who looks
 In steadiness, who hath among least
 things
 An under-sense of greatest ; sees the parts
 As parts, but with a feeling of the whole.
 This, of all acquisitions, first awaits
 On sundry and most widely different
 modes
 Of education, nor with least delight
 On that through which I passed. Atten-
 tion springs,
 And comprehensiveness and memory
 flow,
 From early converse with the works of
 God
 Among all regions ; chiefly where appear
 Most obviously simplicity and power.
 Think, how the everlasting streams and
 woods,
 Stretched and still stretching far and
 wide, exalt
 The roving Indian, on his desert sands :
 What grandeur not unfelt, what pregnant
 show
 Of beauty, meets the sun-burnt Arab's
 eye :
 And, as the sea propels, from zone to zone,
 Its currents ; magnifies its shoals of life

Beyond all compass ; spreads, and seeds
aloft [and aspects
Armies of clouds,—even so, its powers
Shape for mankind, by principles as fixed,
The views and aspirations of the soul
To majesty. Like virtue have the forms
Perennial of the æciet hills : nor less
The changeful language of their counten-
ances
Quickens the slumbering mind, and aids
the thoughts,
However multitudinous, to move

With order and relation. This, if still,
As hitherto, in freedom I may speak,
Not violating any just restraint,
As may be hoped, of real modesty,—
This did I feel, in London's vast domain.
The Spirit of Nature was upon me there ;
The soul of Beauty and enduring Life
Vouchsafed her inspiration, and diffused.
Through meagre lines and colours, and
the press
Of self-destroying, transitory things,
Composure, and ennobling Harmony.

BOOK EIGHTH

RETROSPECT.—LOVE OF NATURE
LEADING TO LOVE OF MAN

WHAT sounds are those, Helvellyn, that
are heard [fair
Up to thy summit, through the depth of
Ascending, as if distance had the power
To make the sounds more audible ? What
crowd
Covers, or sprinkles o'er, yon village
green ?
Crowd seems it, solitary hill to thee,
Though but a little family of men,
Shepherds and tillers of the ground—
betimes
Assembled with their children and their
wives,
And here and there a stranger inter-
spersed.
They hold a rustic fair—a festival,
Such as, on this side now, and now on
that,
Repeated through his tributary vales,
Helvellyn, in the silence of his rest,
Sees annually, if clouds towards either
ocean
Blown from their favourite resting-place,
or mists
Dissolved, have left him an unshrouded
head.
Delightful day it is for all who dwell
In this secluded glen, and eagerly
They give it welcome. Long ere heat of
noon,
From byre or field the kine were brought ;
the sheep
Are penned in cotes ; the chaffering is
begun.
The heifer lows, uneasy at the voice
Of a new master ; bleat the flocks aloud.
Booths are there none ; a stall or two is
here ;
A lame man or a blind, the one to beg,
The other to make music ; hither, too,
From far, with basket, slung upon her arm,
Of hawker's wares—books, pictures,
combs, and pins—

Some aged woman finds her way again,
Year after year, a punctual-visitant !
There also stands a speech-maker by rote,
Pulling the strings of his boxed raree-
show ;
And in the lapse of many years may come
Prouder itinerant, mountebank, or he
Whose wonders in a covered wain lie hid.
But one there is, the loveliest of them all,
Some sweet lass of the valley, looking out
For gains, and who that sees her would
not buy ?
Fruits of her father's orchard, are her
wares,
And with the ruddy produce, she walks
round
Among the crowd, half pleased with, half
ashamed
Of her new office, blushing restlessly.
The children now are rich, for the old to-
day
Are generous as the young ; and, if con-
tent
With looking on, some ancient wedded
pair
Sit in the shade together, while they gaze,
" A cheerful smile unbends the wrinkled
brow,
The days departed start again to life,
And all the scenes of childhood reappear,
Faint, but more tranquil, like the chang-
ing sun
To him who slept at noon and wakes at
eve."
Thus gaiety and cheerfulness prevail,
Spreading from young to old, from old to
young,
And no one seems to want his share.—
Immense
Is the recess, the circumambient world
Magnificent, by which they are embraced :
They move about upon the soft green
turf : [seem
How little they, they and their doings,
These lines are from a descriptive Poem—
" Malvern Hills"—by one of Wordsworth's
oldest friends, Mr. Joseph Cottle.—Ed.

And all that they can further, or obstruct !
 Through utter weakness pitifully dear,
 As tender infants are : and yet how great !
 For all things serve them : their the
 morning light
 Loves, as it glistens on the silent rocks ;
 And them the silent rocks, which now
 from high
 Look down upon them : the reposing
 clouds ;
 The ~~will~~ brooks prattling from invisible
 haunts ;
 And old Helvellyn, conscious of the stir
 Which animates this day their calm abode.

With deep devotion, Nature, did I feel,
 In that enormous City's turbulent world
 Of men and things, what benefit I owed
 To thee, and those domains of rural
 peace,
 Where to the sense of beauty first my
 heart
 Was opened ; tract more exquisitely fair
 Than that famed paradise of ten thousand
 trees,
 Or Gehol's matchless gardens, for delight
 Of the Tartarian dynasty composed
 (Beyond that mighty wall, not fabulous,
 China's stupendous mound) by patient
 toil

Of myriads and boon nature's lavish help :
 There, in a clime from widest empire
 chosen,

Fulfilling (could enchantment have done
 more ?)

A sumptuous dream of flowery lawns,
 with domes

Of pleasure sprinkled over, shady dells
 For eastern monasteries, sunny mounts
 With temples crested, bridges, gondolas,
 Rocks, dens, and groves of foliage taught
 to melt

Into each other their obsequious hues.
 Vanished and vanishing in subtle chase,

• Too fine to be pursued ; or standing forth
 In no discordant opposition, strong
 And gorgeous as the colours side by side
 Bedded among rich plumes of tropic
 birds ;

And mountains over all, embracing all ;
 And all the landscape, endlessly enriched
 With waters running, falling, or asleep.

But lovelier far than this, the paradise
 Where I was reared ; in Nature's primi-
 tive gifts

Favoured no less, and more to every sense
 Delicious, seeing that the sun and sky,
 The elements, and seasons as they change,
 Do find a worthy fellow-labourer there—
 Man free, man working for himself, with
 choice

Of time, and place, and object ; by his
 wants,

His comforts, native occupations, cares,
 Cheerfully led to individual ends
 Or social, and still followed by a train
 Unwooded, unthought-of even—simplicity,
 And beauty, and inevitable grace.

Yea, when a glimpse of those imperial
 towers

Would to a child be transport over-great,
 When but a half-hour's roam through
 such a place

Would leave behind a dance of images,
 That shall break in upon his sleep for
 weeks ;

Even then the common haunts of the
 green earth,

And ordinary interests of man,
 Which they embosom, all without regard
 As both may seem, are fastening on the
 heart

Insensibly, each with the other's help.
 For me, when my affections first were
 led

From kindred, friends, and playmates, to
 partake
 Love for the human creature's absolute
 self,

That noticeable kindness of heart
 Sprang out of fountains, there abounding
 most,

Where sovereign Nature dictated the
 tasks

And occupations which her beauty
 adorned,

And Shepherds were the men that pleased
 me first ;

Not such as Saturn ruled 'mid Latian
 wilds,

With arts and laws so tempered, that
 their lives

Left, even to us toiling in this late day,
 A bright tradition of the golden age ;

Not such as, 'mid Arcadian fastnesses
 Sequestered, handed down among them,
 selves

Felicity, in Grecian song renowned ;
 Nor such as—when an adverse fate had
 driven,

From house and home, the courtly band
 whose fortunes

Entered, with Shakspeare's genius, the
 wild woods

Of Arden—amid sunshine or in shade
 Culled the best fruits of Time's uncounted
 hours,

Ere Phœbe sighed for the false Ganymede ;
 Or there where Perdita and Florizel
 Together danced, Queen of the feast, and
 King ;

Nor such as Spenser fabled. True it is,
 That I had heard (what he perhaps had
 seen)

Of maids at sunrise bringing in from far

Their May-bush, and along the streets in
flocks

Parading with a song of taunting rhymes.
Aimed at the laggards slumbering within
doors;

Had also heard, from those who yet re-
membered,

Tales of the May-pole dance, and wreaths
that decked

Porch, door-way, or kirk-pillar; and of
youths,

Each with his maid, before the sun was
up,

By annual custom, issuing forth in troops,
To drink the waters of some sainted well,
And hang it round with garlands. Love
survives;

But, for such purpose, flowers no longer
grow:

The times, too sage, perhaps too proud,
have dropped

These lighter graces; and the rural ways
And manners which my childhood
looked upon

Were the unluxuriant produce of a life
Intent on little but substantial needs,

Yet rich in beauty, beauty that was felt.
But images of danger and distress,

Man suffering among awful Powers and
Forms;

Of this I heard, and saw enough to make
Imagination restless; nor was free

Myself from frequent perils; nor were
tales

Wanting,—the tragedies of former times,
Hazards and strange escapes, of which
the rocks

Immutable, and overflowing streams,
Where'er I roamed, were speaking

monuments.

Smooth life had flock and shepherd in
old time,

Long springs and tepid winters, on the
banks

Of delicate Galesus; and no less
Those scattered along Adria's myrtle

shores:

Smooth life had herdsman, and his snow-
white herd

To triumphs and to sacrificial rites
Devoted, on the inviolable stream

Of rich Clitumnus; and the goat-herd
lived

As calmly, underneath the pleasant
brows

Of cool Lucretilis, where the pipe was
heard

Of Pan, Invisible God, thrilling the rocks
With tutelary music, from all harm

The fold protecting. I myself, mature
In manhood then, have seen a pastoral

tract

Like one of these, where Fancy might
run wild,

Though under skies less generous, less
serene:

These, for her own delight had Nature
framed

A pleasure-ground, diffused a fair ex-
panse

Of level pasture, islanded with groves
And banked with woody risings; but the

Plain

Endless, here opening widely out, and
there

Shut up in lesser lakes or beds of lawn
And intricate recesses, creek or lay

Sheltered within a shelter, where at
large

The shepherd strays, a rolling hut his
home.

Thither he comes with spring-time, there
abides

All summer, and at sunrise ye may hear
His flageolet to liquid notes of love

Attuned, or sprightly fifes resounding far.
Nook is there none, nor tract of that vast

space

Where passage opens, but the same shall
have

In turn its visitant, telling there his
hours

In unlabourious pleasure, with no task
More toilsome than to carve a beechen

bow!

For spring or fountain, which the
traveller finds,

When through the region he pursues at
His devious course. A glimpse of such

sweet life

I saw when, from the melancholy walls
Of Goslar, once imperial, I renewed

My daily walk along that wide cham-
paign,

That, reaching to her gates, spreads east
and west,

And northwards, from beneath the
mountainous verge

Of the Hercynian forest. Yet, hail to
you

Moors, mountains, headlands, and ye
hollow vales,

Ye long deep channels for the Atlantic's
voice,

Powers of my native region! Ye that
seize

The heart with firmer grasp! Your
snows and streams

Ungovernable, and your terrifying winds,
That howl so dismally for him who treads

Companionless your awful solitudes!
There, 'tis the shepherd's task the winter

long

To wait upon the storms: of their ap-
proach

Sagacious, into sheltering coyes he drives
 His flock, and thither from the home-
 stead bears
 A toilsome burden up the craggy ways,
 And deals it out, their regular nourish-
 ment
 Strewn on the frozen snow. And when
 the spring
 Looks out, and all the pastures dance
 with lambs,
 And when the flock, with warmer weather,
 climbs
 Higher and higher, him his office leads
 To watch their goings, whatsoever track
 The wanderers choose. For this he quits
 his home
 At day-spring, and no sooner doth the
 sun
 Begin to strike him with a fire-like heat,
 Than he lies down upon some shining
 rock,
 And breakfasts with his dog. When
 they have stolen,
 As is their wont, a pittance from strict
 time,
 For rest not needed or exchange of love,
 Then from his couch he starts : and now
 his feet
 Crush out a livelier fragrance from the
 flowers
 Of lowly thyme, by Nature's skill en-
 wrought
 In the wild turf : the lingering dews of
 morn
 Smoke round him, as from hill to hill he
 hies,
 His staff protending like a hunter's spear,
 Or by its aid leaping from crag to crag,
 And o'er the brawling beds of unbridged
 streams.
 Philosophy, methinks, at Fancy's call,
 Might deign to follow him through what
 he does
 Or sees in his day's march : himself he
 feels,
 In those vast regions where his service
 freeman, wedded to his life of hope
 And hazard, and hard labour inter-
 changed
 With that majestic indolence so dear
 To native man. A rambling school-boy,
 thus
 I felt his presence in his own domain,
 As of a lord and master, or a power,
 Or genius, under Nature, under God,
 Presiding ; and severest solitude
 Had more commanding looks when he
 was there.
 When up the lonely brooks on rainy days
 Angling I went, or trod the trackless hills
 By mists bewildered, suddenly mine eyes
 Have glanced upon him distant a few
 steps,

In size a giant, stalking through thick
 fog,
 His sheep like Greenland bears ; or, as
 he stepped
 Beyond the boundary line of some hill-
 shadow,
 His form hath flashed upon me, glorified
 By the deep radiance of the setting sun :
 Or him have I descried in distant sky,
 A solitary object and sublime,
 Above all height ! like an aerial cross
 Stationed alone upon a spiry rock
 Of the Chartreuse, for worship. Thus
 was man
 Enabled outwardly before my sight,
 And thus my heart was early introduced
 To an unconscious love and reverence
 Of human nature ; hence the human
 form
 To me became an index of delight,
 Of grace and honour, power and worthi-
 ness.
 Meanwhile this creature—spiritual al-
 most
 As those of books, but more exalted far ;
 Far more of an unimagined form
 Than the gay Corin of the groves, who
 lives
 For his own fancies, or to dance by the
 hour,
 In coronal, with Phyllis in the midst—
 Was, for the purposes of kind, a man
 With the most common : husband, father ;
 learned,
 Could teach, admonish ; suffered with
 the rest
 From vice and folly, wretchedness and
 fear :
 Of this I little saw, cared less for it,
 But something must have felt.
 Call ye these appearances—
 Which I beheld of shepherds in my youth,
 This sanctity of Nature given to man—
 A shadow, a delusion, ye who pore
 On the dead letter, miss the spirit of
 things :
 Whose truth is not a motion or a shape
 Instinct with vital functions, but a block
 Or waxen image which yourselves have
 made,
 And ye adore ! But blessed be the God
 Of Nature and of Man that this was so ;
 That men before my inexperienced eyes
 Did first present themselves thus purified,
 Removed, and to a distance that was fit :
 And so we all of us in some degree
 Are led to knowledge, whosoever led,
 And howsoever ; were it otherwise,
 And we found evil fast as we find good
 In our first years, or think that it is found,
 How could the innocent heart bear up
 and live !
 But doubly fortunate my lot ; not here

Alone, that something of a better life
Perhaps was round me than it is the
privilege

Of most to move in, but that first I looked
At Man through objects that were great
or fair ;

First communed with him by their help.
And thus

Was founded a sure safeguard and
defence

Against the weight of meanness, selfish
cares,

Coarse manners, vulgar passions, that
beat in

On all sides from the ordinary world
In which we traffic. Starting from this
point

I had my face turned toward the truth,
began

With an advantage furnished by that
kind

Of prepossession, without which the soul
Receives no knowledge that can bring
forth good,

No genuine insight ever comes to her.
From the restraint of over-watchful eyes
Preserved, I moved about, year after
year,

Happy, and now most thankful that my
walk

Was guarded from too early intercourse
With the deformities of crowded life,
And those ensuing laughters and con-
tempts,

Self-pleasing, which, if we would wish to
think

With a due reverence on earth's rightful
lord,

Here placed to be the inheritor of heaven,
Will not permit us ; but pursue the mind,
That to devotion willingly would rise,
Into the temple and the temple's heart.

Yet deem not, Friend ! that human
kind with me

Thus early took a place pre-eminent ;
Nature herself was, at this unripe time,
But secondary to my own pursuits

And animal activities, and all
Their trivial pleasures ; and when these
had drooped

And gradually expired, and Nature,
prized

For her own sake, became my joy, even
then—

And upwards through late youth, until
not less

Than two-and-twenty summers had been
told—

Was Man in my affections and regards
Subordinate to her, her visible forms
And viewless agencies : a passion, she,
A rapture often, and immediate love

Ever at hand ; he, only a delight
Occasional, or accidental grace,
His hour being not yet come. Far less
had then

The inferior creatures, beast or bird,
attuned

My spirit to that gentleness of love
(Though they had long been carefully
observed.)

Won from me those minute obeisances
Of tenderness, which I may number now
With my first blessings. Nevertheless,
on these

The light of beauty did not fall in vain,
Or grandeur circumfuse them to no end.

But when that first, poetic faculty
Of plain imagination and severe,
No longer a mute influence of the soul,
Ventured, at some rash Muse's earnest
call,

To try her strength among harmonious
words :

And to book-notions and the rules of art
Did knowingly conform itself ; there came
Among the simple shapes of human life
A wilfulness of fancy and conceit ;

And Nature and her objects beautified
These fictions, as in some sort, in their
turn,

They burnished her. From touch of this
new power

Nothing was safe : the elder-tree that
grew

Beside the well-known charnel-house had
then

A dismal look : the yew-tree had its
ghost,

That took his station there for ornament :
The dignities of plain occurrence then
Were tasteless, and truth's golden mean,
a point

Where no sufficient pleasure could be
found.

Then, if a widow, staggering with the
blow

Of her distress, was known to have
turned her steps

To the cold grave in which her husband
slept,

One night, or haply more than one,
through pain

Or half-insensate impotence of mind,
The fact was caught at greedily, and
there

She must be visitant the whole year
through,

Wetting the turf with never-ending tears.

Through quaint obliquities I might
pursue

These cravings ; when the fox-glove,
one by one,

Upwards through every stage of the tall
 stem,
 Had shed beside the public way its bells,
 And stood of all dismantled, save the last
 Left at the tapering ladder's top, that
 seemed
 To bend as doth a slender blade of grass
 Tipped with a rain-drop. Fancy loved
 to seat,
 Beneath the plant despoiled, but crested
 still
 With this last relic, soon itself to fall,
 Some vagrant moth, whose arch little
 ones,
 All unconcerned by her dejected plight,
 Laughed as with rival eagerness their
 hands
 Gathered the purple cups that round
 them lay,
 Strewing the turf's green slope.
 A diamond light
 (Whene'er the summer sun, declining,
 smote
 A smooth rock wet with constant springs)
 was seen
 Sparkling from out a copse-clad bank
 that rose
 Fronting our cottage. Oft beside the
 hearth
 Seated, with open door, often and long
 Upon this restless lustre have I gazed,
 That made my fancy restless as itself.
 'Twas now for me a burnished silver
 shield
 Suspended over a knight's tomb, who lay
 Inglorious, buried in the dusky wood :
 An entrance now into some magic cave
 Or palace built by fairies of the rock ;
 Nor could I have been bribed to disen-
 chant
 The spectacle, by visiting the spot.
 Thus wilful Fancy, in no hurtful mood,
 Engrafted far-fetched shapes on feelings
 bred
 • By pure Imagination : busy Power
 She was, and with her ready pupil
 turned
 Instinctively to human passions, then
 Least understood. Yet, 'mid the fer-
 vent swarm
 Of these vagaries, with an eye so rich
 As mine was through the bounty of a
 grand
 And lovely region, I had forms distin-
 To steady me : each airy thought re-
 volved
 Round a substantial centre, which at
 once
 Incited it to motion, and controlled.
 I did not pine like one in cities bred,
 As was thy melancholy lot, dear Friend !
 Great Spirit as thou art, in endless
 dreams

Of sickliness, disjoining, joining, things
 Without the light of knowledge. Where
 the harm,
 If, when the woodman languished with
 disease
 Induced by sleeping nightly on the
 ground
 Within his sod-built cabin, Indian-wise,
 I called the pangs of disappointed love,
 And all the sad etcetera of the wrong,
 To help him to his grave. Meanwhile
 the man,
 If not already from the woods retired
 To die at home, was haply as I knew,
 Withering by slow degrees, 'mid gentle
 airs,
 Birds, running streams, and hills so
 beautiful
 On golden evenings, while the charcoal
 pile
 Breathed up its smoke, an image of his
 ghost
 Or spirit that full soon must take her
 flight.
 Nor shall we not be tending towards
 that point
 Of sound humanity to which our Tale
 Lead, though by sinuous ways, if here I
 shew
 How Fancy, in a season when she wove
 Those slender cords, to guide the uncon-
 scious Boy
 For the Man's sake, could feed at Nature's
 call
 Some pensive musings which might well
 besem
 Maturer years.
 A grove there is whose boughs
 Stretch from the western marge of
 Thurston-mere,
 With length of shade so thick, that whoso
 glides
 Along the line of low-roofed water, moves
 As in a cloister. Once—while, in that
 shade
 Loitering, I watched the golden beams
 of light
 Flung from the setting sun, as they re-
 posed
 In silent beauty on the naked ridge
 Of a high eastern hill—thus flowed my
 thoughts
 In a pure stream of words fresh from the
 heart :
 • Dear native Regions, wheresoe'er shall
 close
 My mortal course, there will I think on
 you :
 Dying, will cast on you a backward look ;
 Even as this setting sun] (albeit the Vale
 Is no where touched by one memorial
 gleam)

Doth with the fond remains of his last
power
Still linger, and a farewell lustre sheds
On the dear mountain-tops where first
he rose.

Enough of humble arguments; recal,
My Song! those high emotions which thy
voice

Has heretofore made known; that
bursting forth

Of sympathy, inspiring and inspired,
When everywhere a vital pulse was felt,
And all the several frames of things, like
stars,

Through every magnitude distinguishable,
Shone mutually indebted, or half lost
Each in the other's blaze, a galaxy
Of life and glory. In the midst stood
Man,

Outwardly, inwardly contemplated,
As, of all visible natures, crown, though
born

Of dust, and kindred to the worm; a
Being.

Both in perception and discernment,
first

In every capability of rapture,
Through the divine effect of power and
love;

As, more than anything we know, instinct
With godhead, and, by reason and by will,
Acknowledging dependency sublime.

Ere long, the lonely mountains left, I
moved,
Begirt, from day to day, with temporal
shapes

Of vice and folly thrust upon my view,
Objects of sport, and ridicule, and scorn,
Manners and characters discriminate,
And little bustling passions that eclipse.
As well they might, the impersonated
thought,

The idea, or abstraction of the kind.

An idler among academic bowers,
Such was my new condition, as at large
Has been set forth; yet here the vulgar
light

Of present, actual, superficial life,
Gleaming through colouring of other
times,

Old usages and local privilege,
Was welcomed, softened, if not solemnised.
This notwithstanding, being brought
more near

To vice and guilt, forerunning wretched-
ness,

I trembled,—thought, at times, of human
life

With an indefinite terror and dismay,
Such as the storms and angry elements
Had bred in me; but gloomier far, a dim

Analogy to uproar and misrule,
Disquiet, danger, and obscurity.

It might be told (but wherefore speak
of things,

Common to all?) that, seeing, I was led
Gravely to ponder—judging between
good

And evil, not as for the mind's delight
But for her guidance—one who was to ~~do~~
As, sometimes to the best of feeble means
I did, by human sympathy impelled:
And, through dislike and most offensive
pain,

Was to the truth conducted; of this
faith

Never forsaken, that, by acting well,
And understanding, I should learn to love
The end of life, and everything we know.

Grave Teacher, stern Preceptress! for
at times

Thou canst put on an aspect most severe;
London, to thee, I willingly return.

Erewhile my verse played idly with the
flowers

Enwrought upon thy mantle; satisfied
With that amusement, and a simple look
Of child-like inquisition now and then
Cast upwards on thy countenance, to
detect

Some inner meanings which might har-
bour there.

But how could I in mood so light indulge,
Keeping such fresh remembrance of the
day,

When, having thriddled the long labyrinth
Of the suburban villages, I first

Entered thy vast dominion? On the
roof

Of an itinerant vehicle I sat,
With vulgar men about me, trivial forms
Of houses, pavement, streets, of men and
things,—

Mean shapes on every side: but, at the
instant,

When to myself it fairly might be said;
The threshold now is overpast, (how
strange

That aught external to the living mind
Should have such mighty sway! yet so it
was,)

A weight of ages did at once descend
Upon my heart; no thought embodied,
no

Distinct remembrances; but weight and
power,—

Power growing under weight: alas! I
feel

That I am trifling: 'twas a moment's
pause,—

All that took place within me came and
went

As in a moment ; yet with Time it dwells,
And grateful memory, as a thing divine.

The curious traveller, who, from open
day,
Hath passed with torches into some huge
cave,
The Grotto of Antiparos, or the Den
In old time haunted by that Danish
Witch, [vault
Yordas ; he looks around and sees the
[viewing on all sides ; sees, or thinks
he sees,

Ere long, the massy roof above his head,
That instantly unsettles and recedes,—
Substance and shadow, light and dark-
ness, all

Commingled, making up a canopy
Of shapes and forms and tendencies to
shape

That shift and vanish, change and inter-
change
Like spectres,—ferment silent and sub-
blime ! [less,

That after a short space works less and
Till, every effort, every motion gone,
The scene before him stands in perfect
view

Exposed, and lifeless as a written book !—
But let him pause awhile, and look again,
And a new quickening shall succeed, at
first

Beginning timidly, then creeping fast,
Till the whole cave, so late a senseless
mass,
Busies the eye with images and forms
Boldly assembled,—here is shadowed
forth

From the projections, wrinkles, cavities,
A variegated landscape,—there the shape
Of some gigantic warrior clad in mail,
The ghostly semblance of a hooded monk,
Veiled nun, or pilgrim resting on his
staff :

Strange congregation ! yet not slow to
meet

Eyes that perceive through minds that
can inspire.

Even in such sort had I at first been
moved,
Nor otherwise continued to be moved,
As I explored the vast metropolis,
Fount of my country's destiny and the
world's ;

That great emporium, chronicle at once
And burial-place of passions, and their
home

Imperial, their chief living residence.

With strong sensations teeming as it
did
Of past and present, such a place must
needs

Have pleased me, seeking knowledge at
that time

Far less than craving power ; yet know-
ledge came,

Sought or unsought, and influxes of power
Came, of themselves, or at her call de-
rived

In fits of kindest apprehensiveness,
From all sides, when what'er was in
itself

Capacious found, or seemed to find, in
me

A correspondent amplitude of mind ;
Such is the strength and glory of our
youth !

The human nature unto which I felt
That I belonged, and revered with
love,

Was not a punctual presence, but a spirit
Diffused through time and space, with
aid derived

Of evidence from monuments, erect,
Prostrate, or leaning towards their com-
mon rest

In earth, the widely scattered wreck sub-
lune

Of vanished nations, or more clearly drawn
From books and what they picture and
record.

'Tis true, the history of our native
land.

With those of Greece compared and
popular Rome,

And in our high-wrought modern nar-
ratives

Striped of their harmonising soul, the life
Of manners and familiar incidents,
Had never much delighted me. And
less

Than other intellects had mine been used
To lean upon extrinsic circumstance
Of record or tradition ; but a sense
Of what in the Great City had been done
And suffered, and was doing, suffering,

still,

Weighed with me, could support the test
of thought ;

And, in despite of all that had gone by,
Or was departing never to return,

There I conversed with majesty and
power

Like independent natures. Hence the
place

Was thronged with impregnations like
the Wilds

In which my early feelings had been
nursed—

Bare hills and valleys, full of caverns,
rocks,

And audible seclusions, dashing lakes,
Echoes and waterfalls, and pointed
crags

That into music touch the passing wind.
 Here then my young imagination found
 No uncongenial element; could here
 Among new objects serve or give command,
 Even as the heart's occasions might
 require,
 To forward reason's else too-scrupulous
 march.
 The effect was, still more elevated views
 Of human nature. Neither vice nor
 guilt,
 Debasement undergone by body or mind,
 Nor all the misery forced upon my sight,
 Misery not lightly passed, but sometimes
 scanned
 Most feelingly, could overthrow my
 trust
 In what we *may* become; induce belief
 That I was ignorant, had been falsely
 taught,
 A solitary, who with vain conceits
 Had been inspired, and walked about in
 dreams.
 From those sad scenes when meditation
 turned,
 Lo! every thing that was indeed divine
 Retained its purity inviolate,
 Nay brighter shone, by this portentous
 gloom
 Set off: such opposition as aroused
 The mind of Adam, yet in Paradise
 Though fallen from bliss, when in the
 East he saw
 1 Darkness ere day's mid course, and
 morning light

1 From Milton, *Paradise Lost*, xi. 204.—*Ed.*

More orient in the western cloud, that
 drew
 O'er the blue firmament a radiant white,
 Descending slow with something heavenly
 fraught.

Add also, that among the multitudes
 Of that huge city, oftentimes was seen
 Affectingly set forth, more than else-
 where

Is possible, the unity of man,
 One spirit over ignorance and vice
 Predominant, in good and evil hearts:
 One sense for moral judgments, as one
 eye

For the sun's light. The soul when
 smitten thus

By a sublime idea, whence power
 Vouchsafed for union or communion,
 teeds

On the pure bliss, and takes her rest with
 God.

Thus from a very early age, O Friend!
 My thoughts by slow gradations had
 been drawn

To human-kind, and to the good and ill
 Of human life: Nature had led me on;
 And oft amid the busy hum "I seemed
 To travel independent of her help,

As if I had forgotten her; but no,
 The world of human-kind outweighed
 not hers

In my habitual thoughts; the scale of
 Though filling daily, still was light, com-
 pared

With that in which *her* mighty objects
 lay.

BOOK NINTH

RESIDENCE IN FRANCE

Even as a river,—partly (it might seem)
 Yielding to old remembrance, and
 swayed
 In part by fear to shape a way direct,
 That would engulf him soon in the
 ravenous sea—
 Turns, and will measure back his course,
 far back,
 Seeking the very regions which he crossed
 In his first outset; so have we, my
 Friend!
 Turned and returned with intricate delay.
 Or as a traveller, who has gained the
 brow
 Of some aerial Down, while there he
 halts
 For breathing-time, is tempted to
 review
 The region left behind him; and, if
 aught

Deserving notice have escaped regard,
 Or been regarded with too careless eye,
 Strives, from that height, with one and
 yet one more

Last look, to make the best amends he
 may:

So have we lingered. Now we start
 afresh

With courage, and new hope risen on our
 toil.

Fair greetings to this shapeless eagerness,
 Whene'er it comes! needful in work so
 long,

Thrice needful to the argument which
 now

Awaits us! Oh, how much unlike the
 past!

Free as a colt at pasture on the hill,
 I ranged at large, through London's wide
 domain.

Month after month. Obscurely did I live,

Not seeking frequent intercourse with
men,
By literature, or elegance, or rank,
Distinguished. Scarcely was a year thus
spent
Ere I forsook the crowded solitude,
With less regret for its luxurious pomp,
And all the nicely-guarded shows of art,
Than for the humble book-stalls in the
streets,
Exposed to eye and hand where'er I
turned.

France lured me forth : the realm that
I had crossed
So lately, journeying toward the snow-
clad Alps.
But now, relinquishing the scrip and staff,
And all enjoyment which the summer
sun
Sheds round the steps of those who meet
the day
With motion constant as his own, I went
Prepared to sojourn in a pleasant town,
Washed by the current of the stately
Loire.

Through Paris lay my readiest course,
and there
Sojourning a few days, I visited
In haste, each spot of old or recent fame,
The latter chiefly ; from the field of Mars
Down to the suburbs of St. Antony,
And from Mont Martyr southward to the
Dome
Of Geneviève. In both her clamorous
Halls,
The National Synod and the Jacobins,
I saw the Revolutionary Power
Toss like a ship at anchor, rocked by
storms ;
The Arcades I traversed, in the Palace
huge
Of Orleans : coasted round and round
the line
Of Tavern, Brothel, Gaming-house, and
Shop,
Great rendezvous of worst and best, the
Of all who had a purpose, or had not ;
I stared and listened, with a stranger's
ears,
To Hawkers and Haranguers, hubbub
wild !
And hissing Factionists with ardent eyes,
In knots, or pairs, or single. Not a look
Hope takes, or Doubt or Fear is forced
to wear,
But seemed there present ; and I scanned
them all,
Watched every gesture uncontrollable,
Of anger, and vexation, and despite,
All side by side, and struggling face to
face,
With gaiety and dissolute idleness.

W.P.

Where silent zephyrs sported with the
dust
Of the Bastille, I sate in the open sun,
And from the rubbish gathered up a
stone,
And pocketed the relic, in the guise
Of an enthusiast ; yet, in honest truth,
I looked for something that I could not
find,
Affecting more emotion than I felt :
For 'tis most certain, that these various
sights,
However potent their first shock, with
me
Appeared to recompense the traveller's
pains
Less than the painted Magdalene of Le
Brun,
A beauty exquisitely wrought, with
hair
Dishevelled, gleaming eyes, and rueful
cheek
Pale and bedropped with overflowing
tears.

But hence to my more permanent abode
I hasten : there, by novelties in speech,
Domestic manners, customs, gestures,
looks,
And all the attire of ordinary life,
Attention was engrossed ; and, thus
amused,
I stood 'mid those concussions, uncon-
cerned,
Tranquil almost, and careless as a flower
Glassed in a green-house, or a parlour
shrub
That spreads its leaves in unmolested
peace,
While every bush and tree, the country
through,
Is shaking to the roots : indifference this
Which may seem strange ; but I was
unprepared
With needful knowledge, had abruptly
passed
Into a theatre, whose stage was filled
And busy with an action far advanced.
Like others, I had skimmed, and some-
times read
With care, the master pamphlets of the
day ;
Nor wanted such half-insight as grew
wild
Upon that meagre soil, helped out by
talk
And public news ; but having never seen
A chronicle that might suffice to show
Whence the main organs of the public
power
Had sprung, their transmigrations, when
and how
Accomplished, giving thus unto events

M.M.

A form and body ; all things were to me
Loose and disjointed, and the affections
left

Without a vital interest. At that time,
Moreover, the first storm was overblown,
And the strong hand of outward violence
Locked up in quiet. For myself, I fear
Now in connection with so great a theme
To speak (as I must be compelled to do)
Of one so unimportant ; night by night
Did I frequent the formal haunts of men,
Whom, in the city, privilege of birth
Sequestered from the rest, societies
Polished in arts, and in punctilious versed ;
Whence, and from deeper causes, all
discourse

Of good and evil of the time was shunned
With scrupulous care : but these restrictions soon

Proved tedious, and I gradually withdrew

Into a noisier world, and thus ere long
Became a patriot ; and my heart was all
Given to the people, and my love was theirs.

A band of military Officers,
Then stationed in the city, were the chief
Of my associates : some of these wore
swords

That had been seasoned in the wars, and all

Were men well-born ; the chivalry of
France.

In age and temper differing, they had yet
One spirit ruling in each heart ; alike
(Save only one, hereafter to be named)
Were bent upon undoing what was done :
This was their rest and only hope ; there-
with

No fear had they of bad becoming worse,
For worst to them was come : nor would
have stirred,

Or deemed it worth a moment's thought
to stir,

In any thing, save only as the act
Looked thitherward. One, reckoning by
years,

Was in the prime of manhood, and ere-
while

He had sat lord in many tender hearts ;
Though heedless of such honours now,
and changed :

His temper was quite mastered by the
times,

And they had blighted him, had eaten
away

The beauty of his person, doing wrong
Alike to body and to mind : his port,
Which once had been erect and open,
now

Was stooping and contracted, and a
face,

Endowed by Nature with her fairest gifts
Of symmetry and light and bloom, ex-
pressed,

As much as any that was ever seen,
A ravage out of season, made by thoughts
Unhealthy and vexatious. With the
hour,

That from the press of Paris duly brought
Its freight of public news, the fever came,
A punctual visitant, to shake this man,
Disarmed his voice and fanned his yellow
cheek

Into a thousand colours ; while he read,
Or mused, his sword was haunted by his
touch

Continually, like an uneasy place
In his own body. 'Twas in truth an hour
Of universal ferment ; mildest men

Were agitated ; and commotions, strife
Of passion and opinion, filled the walls
Of peaceful houses with unquiet sounds.
The soil of common life, was, at that time,
Too hot to tread upon. Oft said I then,
And not then only, " What a mockery
this

Of history, the past and that to come !
Now do I feel how all men are deceived,
Reading of nations and their works, in
faith,

Faith given to vanity and emptiness ;
Oh ! laughter for the page that would
reflect

To future times the face of what now is !"
The land all swarmed with passion, like
a plain

Devoured by locusts,—Carra, Gorsas,—
add

A hundred other names, forgotten now,
Nor to be heard of more ; yet, they were
powers,

Like earthquakes, shocks repeated day
by day.

And felt through every nook of town and
field.

Such was the state of things. Mean-
while the chief

Of my associates stood prepared for flight
To augment the band of emigrants in
arms

Upon the borders of the Rhine, and
leagued

With foreign foes mustered for instant
war.

This was their undisguised intent, and
they

Were waiting with the whole of their
desires

The moment to depart.

An Englishman,
Born in a land whose very name appeared
To license some unruliness of mind ;
A stranger, with youth's further privilege,

And the indulgence that a half-learn't
speech
Wins from the courteous; I, who had
been else
Shunned and not tolerated, freely lived
With these defenders of the Crown, and
talked,
And heard their notions: nor did they
disdain
The wish to bring me over to their
cause.

But though untaught by thinking, or
by books
To reason well of polity or law,
And nice distinctions, then on every
tongue,
Of natural rights and civil: and to acts
Of nations and their passing interests,
(If with unworldly ends and aims com-
pared)
Almost indifferent, even the historian's
tale
Prizing but little otherwise than I prized
Tales of the poets, as it made the heart
Beat high, and filled the fancy with
fair forms,
Old heroes and their sufferings and their
deeds;
Yet in the regal sceptre, and the pomp
Of orders and degrees, I nothing found
Then, or had ever, even in crudest youth,
That dazzled me, but rather what I
mourned
And ill could brook, beholding that the
best
Ruled not, and feeling that they ought
to rule.

For, born in a poor district, and which
yet
Retaineth more of ancient homeliness,
Than any other nook of English ground,
It was my fortune scarcely to have seen,
Through the whole tenor of my school-
day time,
The face of one, who, whether boy or
man,
Was vested with attention or respect
Through claims of wealth or blood; nor
was it least
Of many benefits, in later years
Derived from academic institutes
And rules, that they held something
up to view
Of a Republic, where all stood thus far
Upon equal ground; that we were
brothers all,
In honour, as in one community,
Scholars and gentlemen; where, further-
more,
Distinction open lay to all that came,
And wealth and titles were in less esteem

Than talents, worth, and prosperous
industry. [first
Add unto this, subservience from the
To presences of God's mysterious power
Made manifest in Nature's sovereignty,
And fellowship with venerable books,
To sanction the proud workings of the
soul,
And maintain liberty. It could not be
But that one tutored thus should look
with awe

Upon the faculties of man, receive
gladly the highest promises, and hail,
As best, the government of equal rights
And individual worth. And hence, O
Friend!

If at the first great outbreak I rejoiced
Less than might well befit my youth,
the cause

In part lay here, that unto me the events
Seemed nothing out of nature's certain
course,

A gift that was come rather late than
soon.

No wonder, then, if advocates like these,
Inflamed by passion, blind with pre-
judice,

And stung with injury, at this riper day,
Were impotent to make my hopes put on
The shape of theirs, my understanding
beard

In honour to their honour: zeal, which
yet

Had slumbered, now in opposition burst
Forth like a Polar summer: every word
They uttered was a dart, by counter-
winds

Blown back upon themselves; their
reason seemed

Confusion-stricken by a higher power
Than human understanding, their dis-
course

Maimed, spiritless; and, in their weak-
ness strong,
I triumphed.

Meantime, day by day, the roads
Were crowded with the bravest youth
of France,

And all the promptest of her spirits,
linked

In gallant soldiery, and posting on
To meet the war upon her frontier bounds.

Yet at this very moment do tears start
Into mine eyes: I do not say I weep—
I wept not then,—but tears have dimmed
my sight,

In memory of the farewells of that time,
Domestic severings, female fortitude

At dearest separation, patriot love
And self-devotion, and terrestrial hope,

Encouraged with a martyr's confidence;
Even files of strangers merely seen but
once,

And for a moment, men from far with
 sound
 Of music, martial tunes, and banners
 spread,
 Entering the city, here and there a face,
 Or person singled out among the rest,
 Yet still a stranger and beloved as such :
 Even by these passing spectacles my
 heart
 Was oftentimes uplifted, and they
 seemed
 Arguments sent from Heaven to prove
 the cause
 Good, pure, which no one could stand
 up against,
 Who was not lost, abandoned, selfish.
 proud,
 Mean, miserable, wilfully depraved,
 Hater perverse of equity and truth.

Among that band of Officers was one,
 Already hinted at, of other mould —
 A patriot, thence rejected by the rest,
 And with an oriental loathing spurned,
 As of a different caste. A nieker man
 Than this lived never, nor a more benign,
 Meek though enthusiastic. Injuries
 Made him more gracious, and his nature
 then
 Did breathe its sweetness out most
 sensibly,
 As aromatic flowers on Alpine turf,
 When foot hath crushed them. He
 through the events
 Of that great change wandered in perfect
 faith, [tale
 As through a book, an old romance, or
 Of Fairy, or some dream of actions
 wrought
 Behind the summer clouds. By birth
 he ranked
 With the most noble, but unto the poor
 Among mankind he was in service
 bound,
 As by some tie invisible, oaths professed
 To a religious order. Man he loved
 As man; and, to the mean and the
 obscure,
 And all the homely in their homely
 works,
 Transferred a courtesy which had no air
 Of condescension; but did rather seem
 A passion and a gallantry, like that
 Which he, a soldier, in his idler day
 Had paid to woman: somewhat vain he
 was,
 Or seemed so, yet it was not vanity,
 But fondness, and a kind of radiant joy
 Diffused around him, while he was intent
 On works of love or freedom, or revolved
 Complacently the progress of a cause,
 Whereof he was a part: yet this was
 meek

And placid, and took nothing from the
 man
 That was delightful. Oft in solitude
 With him did I discourse about the end
 Of civil government, and its wisest forms;
 Of ancient loyalty, and chartered rights,
 Custom and habit, novelty and change;
 Of self-respect, and virtue in the few
 For patrimonial honour set apart,
 And ignorance in the labouring multitude.
 For he, to all intolerance indisposed,
 Balanced these contemplations in his
 mind: " " "
 And I, who at that time was scarcely
 dipped
 Into the turmoil, bore a sounder judg-
 ment [me,
 Than later days allowed: carried about
 With less alloy to its integrity,
 The experience of past ages, as, through
 help [way
 Of books and common life, it makes sure
 To youthful minds, by objects over near
 Not pressed upon, nor dazzled or misled
 By struggling with the crowd for present
 ends.

But though not deaf, nor obstinate to
 find
 Error without excuse upon the side
 Of them who strove against us, more
 delight
 We took, and let this freely be confessed,
 In painting to ourselves the miseries
 Of royal courts, and that voluptuous life
 Unfeeling, where the man who is of soul
 The meanest thrives the most; where
 dignity,
 True personal dignity, abideth not;
 A light, a cruel, and vain world cut off
 From the natural inlets of just sentiment,
 From lowly sympathy and chastening
 truth:
 Where good and evil interchange their
 names, [paired
 And thirst for bloody spoils abroad is
 With vice at home. We added dearest
 themes—
 Man and his noble nature, as it is
 The gift which God has placed within his
 power,
 His blind desires and steady faculties
 Capable of clear truth, the one to break
 bondage, the other to build liberty
 On firm foundations, making social life,
 Through knowledge spreading and im-
 perishable,
 As just in regulation, and as pure
 As individual in the wise and good.

We summoned up the honourable deeds
 Of ancient Story, thought of each bright
 spot,

That would be found in all recorded time,
Of truth preserved and error passed away:
Of single spirits that catch the flame from

Heaven,
And how the multitudes of men will feed
And fan each other; thought of sects,
how keen

They are to put the appropriate nature
on,

Triumphant over every obstacle

Of custom, language, country, love, or
hate,

And what they do and suffer for their
creed:

How far they travel, and how long en-
dure:

How quickly mighty Nations have been
formed,

on least beginnings; how, together
locked

By new opinions, scattered tribes have
made

One body, spreading wide as clouds in
heaven

To aspirations then of our own minds
Did we appeal; and, finally, beheld

A living confirmation of the whole
Before us, in a people from the depth

Of shameful imbecility uprisen,
Fresh as the morning star. Elate we

looked
Upon their virtues; saw, in rudest men,
Self-sacrifice the firmest; generous love,

And continence of mind, and sense of
right,

Uppermost in the midst of fiercest strife.

Oh, sweet it is, in academic groves,
Or such retirement, Friend! as we have

known

In the green dales beside our Rotha's
stream,

Greta, or Derwent, or some nameless rill,
To ruminate, with interchange of talk,

On rational liberty, and hope in man,
Justice and peace. But far more sweet

such toil—
Toil, say I, for it leads to thoughts
abstruse—

If nature then be standing on the brink
Of some great trial, and we hear the voice

Of one devoted,—one whom circum-
stance

Hath called upon to embody his deep
sense

In action, give it outwardly a shape,
And that of benediction, to the world.

Then doubt is not, and truth is more than
truth,—

A hope it is, and a desire; a creed
Of zeal, by an authority Divine

Sanctioned, of danger, difficulty, or death.
Such conversation, under Attic shades,

Did Dion hold with Plato; ripened thus
For a Deliverer's glorious task,—and such

He, on that ministry already bound,
Held with Eudemus and Timonides.

Surrounded by adventurers in arms,
When those two vessels with their daring

freight,
For the Sicilian Tyrant's overthrow,

Sailed from Zagynthus,—philosophic
war,

Led by Philosophers. With harder fate,
Though like ambition, such was he, O

Friend!

Of whom I speak. So Beaupuis (let the
name

Stand near the worthiest of Antiquity),
Fashioned his life; and many a long

discourse,
With like persuasion honoured, we

maintained:
He, on his part, accounted for the worst.

He perished fighting, in supreme com-
mand,

Upon the borders of the unhappy Loire,
For liberty, against deluded men,

His fellow country-men; and yet most
blessed

In this, that he the fate of later times
Lived not to see, nor what we now be-

hold.
Who have as ardent hearts as he had

then.
Along that very Loire, with festal

mirth
Resounding at all hours, and innocent

yet
Of civil slaughter, was our frequent walk;

Or in wide forests of continuous shade,
Lofty and over-arched, with open space

Beneath the trees, clear footing many a
mile—

A solemn region. Oft amid those haunts,
From earnest dialogues I slipped in

thought,
And let remembrance steal to other

times,
When, o'er those interwoven roots, moss-

clad,
And smooth as marble or a waveless sea,

Some Hermit, from his cell forth-strayed,
might pace

In sylvan meditation undisturbed;
As on the pavement of a Gothic church

Walks a lone Monk, when service hath
expired,

In peace and silence. But if e'er was
heard,—

Heard, though unseen,—a devious
traveller,

Retiring or approaching from afar
With speed and echoes loud of trampling

hoofs

From the hard floor reverberated, then
It was Angelica thundering through the
woods

Upon her, Galfrey, or that gentle maid
Erminia, fugitive as fair as she.
Sometimes methought I saw a pair of
knights

Joust underneath the trees, that, as in
storm

Rocked high above their heads; anon,
the din

Of boisterous merriment, and music's
roar,

In sudden proclamation, burst from
haunt

Of Satyrs in some viewless glade, with
dance

Rejoicing o'er a female in the midst,
A mortal beauty, their unhappy thrall.

The width of those huge forests, unto me
A novel scene, did often in this way

Master my fancy while I wandered on
With that revered companion. And
sometimes—

When to a convent in a meadow green,
By a brook-side, we came, a roofless pile,

And not by reverential touch of Time
Dismantled, but by violence abrupt—

In spite of those heart-bracing colloquies,
In spite of real fervour, and of that

Less genuine and wrought up within
myself—

I could not but bewail a wrong so harsh,
And for the 'Matin-bell to sound no more

Grieved, and the twilight taper, and the
cross

High on the topmost pinnacle, a sign
(How welcome to the weary traveller's
eyes!)

Of hospitality and peaceful rest.
And when the partner of those varied
walks

Pointed upon occasion to the site
Of Romorentin, home of ancient kings,

To the imperial edifice of Blois,
Of to that rural castle, name now slipped

From my remembrance, where a lady
lodged,

By the first Francis wooed, and bound
to him

In chains of mytual passion, from the
tower,

As a tradition of the country tells,
Practised to commune with her royal
knight

By cressets and love-beacons, inter-
course

'Twixt her high-seated residence and
his

Far off at Chambord on the plain
beneath;

Even here, though less than with the
peaceful house

Religious, 'mid those frequent monuments
Of Kings, their vices and their better
deeds,

Imagination, potent to inflame
At times with vituous wrath and noble
scorn,

Did also often mitigate the force
Of civic profulgence, the bigotry,

So call it, of a youthful patriot's mind;
And on these spots with many gleams

I looked
Of chivalrous delight. Yet not the less,

Hatred of absolute rule, where will of one
Is law for all, and of that barren pride

In them who, by immunities unjust,
Between the sovereign and the people

stand
He helped and not theirs, laid stronger

hold
Daily upon me, mixed with pity too

And love; for where hope is, there love
will be

For the abject multitude. And when we
chanced

One day to meet a hunger-bitten girl,
Who crept along fitting her languid, gaunt

Unto a heifer's motion, by a cord
Tied to her arm, and picking thus from

the lane
Its sustenance, while the girl with pallid

Was busy knitting in a heartless mood
Of solitude, and at the sight my friend

In agitation said, "'Tis against that
That we are fighting," I with him believed

That a benignant spirit was abroad
Which might not be withstood, that

poverty
Abject as this would in a little time

Be found no more, that we should see
the earth

Unthwarted in her wish to recompense
The meek, the lowly, patient child of toil,

All institutes for ever blotted out
That legitimised exclusion, empty pomp,

Abolished, sensual state and cruel power,
Whether by edict of the one or few;

And finally, as sum and crown of all,
Should see the people having a strong

hand
In framing their own laws; whence

better days
To all mankind. But, these things set

apart,
Was not this single confidence enough

To animate the mind that ever turned
A thought to human welfare? That

henceforth
Captivity by mandate without law

Should cease; and open accusation lead
To sentence in the hearing of the world,

And open punishment, if not the air
Be free to breathe in, and the heart of

man

Dread nothing. From this height I shall
not stoop

To humbler matter that detained us off
In thought or conversation, public acts,
And public persons, and emotions
wrought

Within the breast, as every varying winds
Of record or report swept over us :

But I might here, instead, repeat a tale,¹
Told by my Patriot friend, of sad events,
That prove to what low depth had
struck the roots,

How widely spread the boughs, of that
old tree

Which, as a deadly mischief, and a foul
And black dishonour, France was weary
of.

Oh, happy time of youthful lovers,
thus

The story might begin,) oh, balmy time.
In which a love-knot, on a lady's brow,
Is fairer than the fairest star in Heaven !
So might—and with that prelude *did* be-
gin

The record—and, in faithful verse, was
given
The doleful sequel.

But our little bark
On a strong river boldly hath been
launched ;

And from the driving current should we
turn

To loiter willfully within a creek,
Howe'er attractive. Fellow voyager !

¹ See "Vaudracour and Julia," p. 98.—*Ed.*

Would'st thou not chide ? Yet deem
not my pains lost :

For Vaudracour and Julia (so were named
The ill-fated pair) in that plain tale will
draw

Tears from the hearts of others, when
their own

Shall beat no more. Thou, also, there
hast read,

At leisure, how the enamoured youth was
driven,

By public power abased, to fatal crime,
Nature's rebellion against monstrous law ;

How, between heart and heart, oppression
thrust

Her mandates, severing whom true love
had joined,

Harassing both : until he sank and
pressed

The couch his fate had made for him ;
supine,

Save when the stings of viperous remorse,
Trying their strength, enforced him to
start up.

Aghast and prayerless. Into a deep
wood

He fled, to shun the haunts of human
[kind ;
There dwelt, weakened in spirit more and
more ;

Nor could the voice of Freedom, which
through France

Full speedily resounded, public hope,
Or personal memory of his own worst

wrongs,
Rouse him : but, hidden in those gloomy
shades,

His days he wasted,—an imbecile mind.

BOOK TENTH

RESIDENCE IN FRANCE

CONTINUED

It was a beautiful and silent day
That overspread the countenance of earth.

Then fading with unusual quietness,—
A day as beautiful as e'er was given

To soothe regret, though deepening what
it soothed,

When by the gliding Loire I paused, and
cast

Upon his rich domains, vineyard and
tilth,

Green meadow-ground, and many-coloured
woods,

Again, and yet again, a farewell look :
Then from the quiet of that scene passed
on,

Bound to the fierce Metropolis. From
his throne

The King had fallen, and that invading
host—

Presumptuous cloud, on whose black
front was written

The tender mercies of the dismal wind
That bore it—on the plains of Liberty

Had burst innocuous. Say in bolder
words,

They—who had come clate as eastern
hunters

Banded beneath the Great Mogul, when
he

Erewhile went forth from Agra or Lahore,
Rajahs and Omrahs in his train, intent

To drive their prey enclosed within a ring
Wide as a province, but, the signal given,

Before the point of the life-threatening
spear

Narrowing itself by moments—they, rash
men.

Had seen the anticipated quarry turned
Into avengers, from whose wrath they

fled
In terror. Disappointment and dismay

Remained for all whose fancies had run wild

With evil expectations ; confidence
And perfect triumph for the better cause.

The State, as if to stamp the final seal
On her security, and to the world
Show what she was, a high and fearless
soul,

Exulting in defiance, or heart-stung
By sharp resentment, or belike to taunt
With spiteful gratitude the baffled League,
That had stirred up her slackening
faculties

To a new transition, when the King was
crushed,

Spared not the empty throne, and in
proud haste

Assumed the body and venerable name
Of a Republic. Lamentable crimes,
'Tis true, had gone before this hour, dire
work

Of massacre, in which the senseless sword
Was prayed to as a judge ; but these
were past.

Earth free from them for ever, as was
thought.—

Ephemeral monsters, to be seen but once !
Things that could only show themselves
and die.

Cheered with this hope, to Paris I re-
turned.

And ranged, with ardour heretofore unfelt,
The spacious city, and in progress passed
The prison where the unhappy Monarch
lay.

Associate with his children and his wife
In bondage ; and the palace, lately
stormed

With roar of cannon by a furious host.
I crossed the square (an empty area then !)

Of the Carrousel, where so late had lain
The dead, upon the dying heaped, and
gazed

On this and other spots, as doth a man
Upon a volume whose contents he knows
Are memorable, but from him locked up,
Being written in a tongue he cannot read,
So that he questions the mute leaves with
pain.

And half upbraids their silence. But
that night

I felt most deeply in what world I was,
What ground I trod on, and what air I
breathed.

High was my room and lonely, near the
roof

Of a large mansion or hotel, a lodge
That would have pleased me in more quiet
times :

Not was it wholly without pleasure then.
With unextinguished taper I kept watch,
Reading at intervals ; the fear gone by

Pressed on me almost like a fear to come.
I thought of those September massacres,
Divided from me by one little month,
Saw, them and touched : the rest was
conjured up

From tragic fictions or true history,
Remembrances and dim admonishments.
The horse is taught his manage, and no
star

Of wildest course but treads back his
own steps :

For the spent hurricane the air provides
As fierce a speciestor ; the tide retreats
But to return out of its hiding-place
In the great deep ; all things have second
birth ;

The earthquake is not satisfied at once ;
And in this way I wrought upon myself.

Until I seemed to hear a voice that cried,
To the whole city, " Sleep no more." The
trance

Fled with the voice to which it had given
birth ;

But vainly comments of a calmer mind
Promised soft peace and sweet forgetful-
ness.

The place, all hushed and silent as it was,
Appeared unfit for the repose of night,
Defenceless as a wood where tigers roam.

With early morning towards the Palace
walk

Of Orleans eagerly I turned : as yet
The streets were still ; not so those long
Arcades ;

There, 'mid a peal of ill-matched sounds
and cries,

That greeted me on entering, I could
hear

Shrill voices from the hawkers in the
throng.

Bawling, " Denunciation of the Crimes
Of Maximilian Robespierre ; " the hand,
Prompt as the voice, held forth a printed
speech,

The same that had been recently pro-
nounced,

When Robespierre, not ignorant for what
mark

Some words of indirect reproof had been
Intended, rose in hardihood, and dared
The man who had an ill surmise of him
To bring his charge in openness ; where-
at, [stirred,

When a dead pause ensued, and no one
In silence of all present, from his seat
Louvct walked single through the avenue,
And took his station in the Tribune, say-
ing,

" I, Robespierre, accuse thee ! " Well is
known

The inglorious issue of that charge, and
how

He, who had launched the startling thunderbolt,
The one bold man, whose voice the attack
had sounded,
Was left without a follower to discharge
His perilous duty, and retire lamenting
That Heaven's best aid was wasted upon
men
Who to themselves are false.

But these are things
Of which I speak, only as they were
storm
Or sunshine to my individual mind,
No further. Let me then relate that
now—

In some sort seeing with my proper eyes
That Liberty, and Life, and Death would
soon

To the remotest corners of the land
Lie in the arbitrement of those who ruled
The capital City; what was struggled
for,

And by what combatants victory must
be won;

The indecision on their part whose aim
Seemed best, and the straightforward
path of those

Who in attack or in defence were strong
Through their impiety—my inmost soul
Was agitated; yea, I could almost
Have prayed that throughout earth upon
all men,

By patient exercise of reason made
Worthy of liberty, all spirits filled
With zeal expanding in Truth's holy
light,

The gift of tongues might fall, and power
arrive

From the four quarters of the winds to
do

For France, what without help she could
not do,

A work of honour; think not that to
this

I added, work of safety: from all doubt
Or trepidation for the end of things.
Far was I, far as angels are from guilt.

Yet did I grieve, nor only grieved,
but thought

Of opposition and of remedies:
An insignificant stranger and obscure.

And one, moreover, little graced with
power

Of eloquence, even in my native speech,
And all unfit for tumult or intrigue.

Yet would I at this time with willing
heart

Have undertaken for a cause so great
Service however dangerous. I revolved,
How much the destiny of Man had still
Hung upon single persons; that there
was,

Transcendent to all local patrimony,
One nature, as there is one sun in heaven;
That objects, even as they are great,
thereby

Do come within the reach of humblest
eyes:

That Man is only weak through his mis-
trust

And want of hope where evidence divine
Proclaims to him that hope should be
most sure:

Nor did the inexperience of my youth
Preclude conviction, that a spirit strong
In hope, and trained to noble aspirations,
A spirit thoroughly faithful to itself,
Is for Society's unreasoning herd

A domineering instinct, serves at once
For way and guide, a fluent receptacle
That gathers up each petty straggling
rill

And vein of water, glad to be rolled on
In safe obedience; that a mind, whose
rest

Is where it ought to be, in self-restraint,
In circumspection and simplicity,
Falls rarely in entire discomfiture
Below its aim, or meets with, from with-
out.

A treachery that foils it or defeats;
And, lastly, if the means on human will,
Frail human will, dependent should be-
tray

Him who too boldly trusted them, I felt
That 'mid the loud distractions of the
world

A sovereign voice subsists within the soul,
Arbiter undisturbed of right and wrong,
Of life and death, in majesty severe
Enjoining, as may best promote the aims
Of truth and justice, either sacrifice,
From whatsoever region of our cares
Or our infirm affections Nature pleads,
Earnest and blind, against the stern de-
cece.

On the other side, I called to mind
those truths

That are the common-places of the
schools—

(A theme for boys, too hackneyed for
their sires,)

Yet, with a revelation's liveliness,
In all their comprehensive bearings
known

And visible to philosophers of old,
Men who, to business of the world un-
trained,

Lived in the shade; and to Harmodius
known

And his compeer Aristogiton, known
To Brutus—that tyrannic power is weak,
Hath neither gratitude, nor faith, nor
love,

Nor the support of good or evil men,
To trust in; that the godhead which is

Can never utterly be charmed or stilled;
That nothing hath a natural right to last
But equity and reason; that all else
Meets foes irreconcilable, and at best
Lives only by variety of disease.

Well might my wishes be intense, my
thoughts
Strong and perturbed, not doubting at
that time
But that the virtue of one paramount
mind
Would have abashed those impious crests
—have quelled
Outrage and bloody power, and—in de-
spite
Of what the People long had been and
were
Through ignorance and false teaching,
sadder proof
Of immaturity, and—in the teeth
Of desperate opposition from without—
Have cleared a passage for just govern-
ment.
And left a solid birthright to the State,
Redeemed, according to example given
By ancient lawgivers.

In this frame of mind,
Dragged by a chain of harsh necessity,
So seemed it,—now I thankfully acknow-
ledge,
Forced by the gracious providence of
Heaven,—
To England I returned, else (though
assured
That I both was and must be of small
weight,

No better than a landsman on the deck
Of a ship struggling with a hideous storm)
Doubtless, I should have then made com-
mon cause
With some who perished; haply perished
too,

A poor mistaken and bewildered offer-
ing,—
Should to the breast of Nature have gone
back,

With all my resolutions, all my hopes,
A Poet only to myself, to men
Useless, and even, beloved Friend! a
soul
To thee unknown!

Twice had the trees let fall
Their leaves, as often Winter had put on
His hoary crown, since I had seen the
surge
Beat against Albion's shore, since ear of
mine
Had caught the accents of my native
speech

Upon our native country's sacred ground.
A patriot of the world, how could I glide
Into communion with her sylvan shades,
Erewhile my tuneful haunt? It pleased
me more.

To abide in the great City, where I
found
The general air still busy with the stir
Of that first memorable onset made
By a strong levy of humanity
Upon the traffickers in Negro blood;
Effort which, though defeated, had
recalled

To notice old forgotten principles,
And through the nation spread a novel
heat

Of virtuous feeling. For myself, I own
That this particular strife had wanted
power

To rivet my affections; nor did now
Its unsuccessful issue much excite
My sorrow; for I brought with me the
faith

That, if France prospered, good men
would not lag
Pay fruitless worship to humanity.
And this most rotten branch of human
shame,

Object, so seemed it of superfluous pains,
Would fall together with its parent tree.
What, then, were my emotions, when in
arms

Britain put forth her free-born strength
in league,

Oh, pity and shame! with those con-
federate Powers!

Not in my single self alone I found,
But in the minds of all ingenious youth,
Change and subversion from that hour.
No shock

Given to my moral nature had I known
Down to that very moment; neither
lapse

Nor turn of sentiment that might be
named

A revolution, save at this one time;
All else was progress on the self-same
path

On which, with a diversity of pace,
I had been travelling: this a stride at
once

Into another region. As a light
And pliant harebell, swinging in the
breeze

On some grey rock its birth-place—
so had I

Wantoned, fast rooted on the ancient
tower

Of my beloved country, wishing not
A happier fortune than to wither there:
Now was I from that pleasant station
torn

And tossed about in whirlwind. I re-

Yea, afterwards—truth most painful to record!—

Exulted, in the triumph of my soul,
When Englishmen by thousands were
o'erthrown,

Left without glory on the field, or driven,
Brave hearts! to shameful flight. It
was a grief,—

Grief call it not, 'twas anything but that,—
A conflict of sensations without name,
Of which he only, who may love the sight
Of a village steeple, as I do, can judge.
When, in the congregation bending all
To their great Father, prayers were
offered up,

Or praises for our country's victories;
And, 'mid the simple worshippers, per-
chance

I only, like an uninvited guest
Whom no one owned, sat silent, shall
I add,

Fed on the day of vengeance yet, to
come.

• Oh! much have they to account for,
who could tear,
By violence, at one decisive rent,
From the best youth in England their
dear pride,
Their joy, in England; this, too, at a
time

In which worst losses easily might wean
The best of names, when patriotic love
Did of itself in modesty give way,
Like the Precursor when the Deity
Is come Whose harbinger he was; a
time

In which apostasy from ancient faith
Seemed but conversion to a higher creed;
Withal a season dangerous and wild,
A time when sage Experience would
have snatched

Flowers out of any hedge-row to com-
pose

• A chaplet in contempt of his grey locks.

• When the proud fleet that bears the
red-cross flag

In that unworthy service was prepared
To mingle, I beheld the vessels lie,

A brood of gallant creatures, on the deep;
I saw them in their rest, a sojourner
Through a whole month of calm and
glassy days

In that beautiful island which protects
Their place of convocation—there I
heard,

Each evening, pacing by the still sea-
shore,

A moat sound that never failed,—
The sunset cannon. While the orb went
down

In the tranquillity of nature, came

That voice, ill requiem! seldom heard
by me
Without a spirit overcast by dark
Imaginations, sense of woes to come,
Sorrow for human kind, and pain of
heart.

In France, the men, who, for their des-
perate ends,

Had plucked up mercy by the roots, were
glad

Of this new enemy. Tyrants, strong be-
fore

In wicked pleas, were strong as demons
now;

And thus, on every side beset with foe
The goaded land waxed mad; the crimes
of few

Spread into madness of the many; blasts
From hell came sanctified like airs from
heaven.

The sternness of the just, the faith of
those

Who doubted not that Providence had
times

Of vengeful retribution, theirs who
throned

The human Understanding paramount
And made of that their God, the hopes
of men

Who were content to barter short-lived
pangs

For a paradise of ages, the blind rage
Of insolent tempers, the light vanity

Of intermeddlers, steady purposes
Of the suspicious, slips of the indiscreet,

And all the accidents of life were pressed
Into one service, busy with one work.

The Senate stood aghast, her prudence
quenched.

Her wisdom stifled, and her justice scared,
Her frenzy only active to extol

Past outrages, and shape the way for new,
Which no one dared to oppose or mitigate.

Domestic carnage now filled the whole
year

With feast-days; old men from the
chimney-nook,

The maiden from the bosom of her love,
The mother from the cradle of her babe,

The warrior from the field—all perished,
all—

Friends, enemies, of all parties, ages,
ranks,

Head after head, and never heads enough
For those that bade them fall. They

found their joy,
They made it proudly, eager as a child,

(If like desires of innocent little ones
May with such heinous appetites be com-
pared,)

Pleased in some open field to exercise

A toy that mimics with revolving wings
The motion of a wind-mill; though the
air

Do of itself blow fresh, and make the
vanes

Spin in his eyesight, *that* contents him
not,

But, with the plaything at arm's length,
he sets

His front against the blast, and runs
amain,

That it may whirl the faster.

Anid the depth
Of those enormities, even thinking minds
Forgot, at seasons, whence they had their
being :

Forgot that such a sound was ever heard
As Liberty upon earth : yet all beneath
Her innocent authority was wrought,
Nor could have been, without her blessed
name.

The illustrious wife of Roland, in the
hour

Of her composure, felt that agony,
And gave it vent in her last words. O
Friend !

It was a lamentable time for man,
Whether a hope had e'er been his or not ;
A woful time for them whose hopes sur-
vived

The shock ; most woful for those few who
still

Were flattered, and had trust in human
kind :

They had the deepest feeling of the grief.
Meanwhile the Invaders fared as they
deserved :

The Herculean Commonwealth had put
forth her arms,

And throttled with an infant godhead's
might

The snakes about her cradle ; that was
well,

And as it should be : yet no cure for them
Whose souls were sick with pain of what
would be

Hereafter brought in charge against man-
kind.

Most melancholy at that time, O Friend !
Were my day-thoughts,—my nights were
miserable :

Through months, through years, long
after the last beat

Of those atrocities, the hour of sleep
To me came rarely charged with natural
gifts,

Such ghastly visions had I of despair
And tyranny, and implements of death,
And innocent victims sinking under fear,
And momentary hope, and worn-out
prayer.

Each in his separate cell, or penned in
crowds

For sacrifice, and struggling with fond
mirth

And levity in dungeons, where the dust
Was laid with tears. Then suddenly the
scene

Changed, and the unbroken dream en-
tangled me

In long orations, which I strove to plead
Before unjust tribunals,—with a voice
Labouring, a brain confounded, and a
sense,

Death-like, of treacherous desertion, felt
In the last place of refuge—my own soul.

When I began in youth's delightful
prime

To yield myself to Nature, when that
strong

And holy passion overcame me first,
Nor day nor night, evening or morrow, was
free

From its oppression. But, O Poyer
Supreme !

Without Whose call this world would
cease to breathe,

Who from the fountain of Thy grace dost
fill

The veins that branch through every
frame of life,

Making man what he is, creature divine,
In single or in social eminence,

Above the rest raised infinite ascents . . .
When reason that enables him to be

Is not sequestered—what a change is
here !

How different ritual for this after-wor-
ship.

What countenance to promote this second
love !

The first was service paid to things which
lie

Guarded within the bosom of Thy will.
Therefore to serve was high beatitude :

Tumult was therefore gladness, and the
fear

Ennobling, venerable ; sleep secure,
And waking thoughts more rich than

happiest dreams.

But as the ancient Prophets, borne
aloft

In vision, yet constrained by natural laws^a
With them to take a troubled human

heart,
Wanted not consolations, nor a creed

Of reconciliation, then when they de-
nounced,

On towns and cities, wallowing in the
abyss

Of their offences, punishment to come ;
Or saw, like other men, with bodily eyes,

Before them, in some desolated place,
The wrath consummate and the threat

fulfilled ;

So, with devout humility be it said,
So, did a portion of that spirit fall
On me uplifted from the vantage-ground
Of pity and sorrow to a state of being
That through the time's exceeding feg-
ness saw

Glimpses of retribution, terrible,
And in the order of sublime behests :
But, even if that were not, amid the awe
Of unintelligible chastisement,
Not only acquiescences of faith
Survived, but daring sympathies with
power,

Motions not treacherous or profane, else
why

Within the folds of no ungentle breast,
Their dread vibration to this hour pro-
longed ?

Wild blasts of music thus could find their
way

Into the midst of turbulent events :
So that worst tempests might be listened
to.

Then was the truth received into my
heart,

That, under heaviest sorrow earth can
bring,

If from the affliction, somewhere do not
grow

Honour which could not else have been,
a faith,

An elevation, and a sanctity,
If new strength be not given nor old
restored,

The blame is ours, not Nature's. When
a taunt

Was taken up by scoffers in their pride,
Saying, "Behold the harvest that we
reap

From popular government and equality,"
I clearly saw that neither these nor aught
Of wild belief engrafted on their names
By false philosophy had caused the woe,
But a terrific reservoir of guilt

And ignorance filled up from age to age,
That could no longer hold its loathsome
charge,

But burst and spread in deluge through
the land.

And as the desert hath green spots, the
sea

Small islands scattered amid stormy
waves,

So that disastrous period did not want
Bright sprinklings of all human excellence,
To which the silver wands of saints in
Heaven

Might point with rapturous joy. Yet
not the less,

For those examples, in no age surpassed,
Of fortitude and energy and love,
And human nature faithful to herself

Untier worst trials, was I driven to think
Of the glad times when first I traversed
France

A youthful pilgrim : above all reviewed
That eventide, when under windows
bright

With happy faces, and with garlands
hung,

And through a rainbow-arch that
spanned the street.

Triumphal pomp for liberty confirmed,
I paced, a dear companion at my side,
The town of Arras, whence with promise
high

Issued, on delegation to sustain
Humanity and right, that Robespierre,
He who thereafter, and in how short
time !

Wielded the sceptre of the Atheist crew.
When the calamity spread far and wide —
And this same city, that did then appear
To outrun the rest in exultation, groaned
Under the vengeance of her cruel son,
As Lear reproached the winds—I could
almost

Have quarrelled with that blameless
spectacle

For lingering yet an image in my mind
To mock me under such a strange reverse.

O Friend ! few happier moments have
been mine

Than that which told the downfall of this
Tribe

So dreaded, so abhorred. The day de-
serves

A separate record. Over the smooth
sands

Of Leven's ample estuary lay
My journey, and beneath a genial sun,
With distant prospect among gleams of
sky

And clouds, and intermingling mountain
tops,

In one inseparable glory clad,
Creatures of one ethereal substance met
In consistory, like a diadem
Or crown of burning seraphs as they sit
In the empyrean. Underneath that
pomp

Celestial, lay unseen the pastoral vales
Among whose happy fields I had grown
up

From childhood. On the fulgent spec-
tacle,

That neither passed away nor changed,
I gazed

Enrapt ; but brightest things are wont
to draw

Sad opposites out of the inner heart,
As even their pensive influence drew
from mine.

How could it otherwise ? for not in vain

That very morning had I turned aside
To seek the ground where, 'mid a throng
of graves,
An honoured teacher of my youth was
laid,
And on the stone were graven by his
desire
Lines from the churchyard elegy of Gray,
This faithful guide, speaking from his
death-bed,
Added no farewell to his parting counsel,
But said to me, "My head will soon lie
low :"
And when I saw the turf that covered
him,
After the lapse of full eight years, those
words,
With sound of voice and countenance of
the Man,
Came back upon me, so that some few
tears [now
Fell from me in my own despite. But
I thought, still traversing that wide-
spread plain,
With tender pleasure of the verses graven
Upon his tombstone, whispering to my-
self :
"He loved the Poets, and, if now alive,
Would have loved me, as one not desti-
tute
Of promise, nor belying the kind hope
That he had formed, when I, at his com-
mand,
Began to spin, with toil, my earliest
songs.

As I advanced, all that I saw or felt
Was gentleness and peace. Upon a small
And rocky island near, a fragment stood
(Itself like a sea rock) the low remains
(With shells encrusted, dark with briny
weeds)
Of a dilapidated structure, once
A Romish chapel, where the vested
priest
Said matins at the hour that suited
those
Who crossed the sands with ebb of morn-
ing tide.
Not far from that still ruin all the plain
Lay spotted with a variegated crowd
Of vehicles and travellers, horse and foot,
Wading beneath the conduct of their
guide
In loose procession through the shallow
stream
Of inland waters ; the great sea mean-
while
Heaved at safe distance, far retired. I
paused,

Longing for skill to paint a scene so
bright
And cheerful, but the foremost of the
band
As he approached, no salutation given
In the familiar language of the day,
Cried, "Robespierre is dead!"—nor
was a doubt,
After strict question, left within my
mind
That he and his supporters all were
fallen.

Great was my transport, deep my
gratitude
To everlasting Justice, by this fiat
Made manifest. "Come now, ye golden
times,"
Said I forth-pouring on those open sands
A hymn of triumph : "as the morning
comes
From out the bosom of the night, come
ye :
Thus far our trust is verified ; behold !
They who with clumsy desperation
brought
A river of Blood, and preached that
nothing else
Could cleanse the Augean stable, by the
night
Of their own helper have been swept
away ;
Their madness stands declared and
visible.
Elsewhere will safety now be sought, and
earth
March firmly towards righteousness and
peace."—
Then schemes I framed more calmly,
when and how
The madding factions might be tran-
quillised,
And how through hardships manifold
and long
The glorious renovation would proceed.
Thus interrupted by uneasy bursts
Of exultation, I pursued my way
Along that very shore which I had
skimmed
In former days, when—spurring from the
Vale
Of Nightshade, and St. Mary's moulder-
ing fane,
And the stone abbot, after circuit made
In wantonness of heart, & joyous band
Of school-boys hastening to their distant
home
Along the margin of the moonlight sea—
We beat with thundering hoofs the level
sand.

BOOK ELEVENTH

FRANCE

CONCLUDED

From that time forth, Authority in France

Put on a milder face ; Terror had ceased.
Yet everything was wanting that might give

Courage to them who looked for good by light

Of rational Experience, for the shoots
And hopeful blossoms of a second spring :

Yet, in me, confidence was unimpaired ;
The Senate's language, and the public acts

And measures of the Government, though both

Weak, and of heartless omen, had not power

To daunt me ; in the People was my trust :

And, in the virtues which mine eyes had seen,

I knew that wound external could not take

Life from the young Republic ; that new foes

Would only follow, in the path of shame,
Their brethren, and her triumphs be in the end

Great, universal, irresistible.

This intuition led me to confound

One victory with another, higher far,—

Triumphs of unambitious peace at home,

And noiseless fortitude. Beholding still

Resistance strong as heretofore, I thought
That what was in degree the same was likewise

The same in quality,—that, as the worse
Of the two spirits then at strife remained

Untired, the better, surely, would preserve

The heart that first had roused him.
Youth maintains,

In all conditions of society,

Communion more direct and intimate

With Nature,—hence, oftentimes, with reason too—

Than age or manhood, even. To Nature, then,

Power had reverted : habit, custom, law,

Had left an interregnum's open space

For her to move about in, uncontrolled.

Hence could I see how Babel-like their task,

Who, by the recent deluge stupified,

With their whole souls went culling from the day

Its petty promises, to build a tower

For their own safety ; laughed with my compeers

At gravest heads, by enmity to France
Distempered, till they found, in every blast

Forced from the street-disturbing news-
man's horn,

For her great cause record or prophecy
Of utter ruin. How might we believe

That wisdom could, in any shape, come near

Men clinging to delusions so insane ?

And thus, experience proving that no few

Of our opinions had been just, we took
Like credit to ourselves where less was due,

And thought that other notions were as sound,

Yea, could not but be right, because we saw

That foolish men opposed them.

To a strain
More animated I might here give way,

And tell, since juvenile errors are my theme,

What in those days, through Britain, was performed

To turn all judgments out of their right course

But this is passion over-near ourselves,
Reality too close and too intense,

And intermixed with something, in my mind,

Of scorn and condemnation personal,
That would profane the sanctity of verse.

Our Shepherds, this say merely, at that time

Acted, or seemed at least to act, like men
Thirsting to make the guardian crook of law

A tool of murder ; they who ruled the
Though with such awful proof before their eyes

That he, who would sow death, reaps death, or worse,

And can reap nothing better, child-like longed

To imitate, not wise enough to avoid ;
Or left (by mere timidity betrayed)

The plain straight road, for one no better chosen

Than if their wish had been to undermine
Justice, and make an end of Liberty.

But from these bitter truths I must return

To my own history. It hath been told
That I was led to take an eager part

In arguments of civil polity,
Abruptly, and indeed before my time :

I had approached, like other youths, the shield

Of human nature from the golden side.
And would have fought, even to the death, to attest

The quality of the metal which I saw.
What there is best in individual man,
Of wise in passion, and sublime in power,
Benevolent in small societies,
And great in large ones, I had oft revolved,
Felt deeply, but not thoroughly understood

By reason : nay, far from it ; they were yet,

As cause was given me afterwards to learn,

Not proof against the injuries of the day ;
Lodged only at the sanctuary's door,
Not safe within its bosom. Thus prepared,

And with such general insight into evil.
And of the bounds which sever it from good,

As books and common intercourse with life

Must needs have given—to the inexperienced mind,

When the world travels in a beaten road,
Guide faithful as is needed—I began
To meditate with ardour on the rule
And management of nations ; what it is
And ought to be ; and strove to learn how far

Their power or weakness, wealth or poverty,

Their happiness or misery, depends
Upon their laws, and fashion of the State.

¹ O pleasant exercise of hope and joy !
For mighty were the auxiliars which then stood

Upon our side, us who were strong in love !
Bliss was it in that dawn to be alive,
But to be young was very Heaven ! O times,

In which the meagre, stale, forbidding ways

Of custom, law, and statute, took at once
The attraction of a country in romance !
When Reason seemed the most to assert her rights

When most intent on making of herself
A prime enchantress—to assist the work,
Which then was going forward in her name !

Not favoured spots alone, but the whole Earth,

The beauty wore of promise—that which sets

(As at some moments might not be unfelt
Among the bowers of Paradise itself)

The budding rose above the rose full blown.

What temper at the prospect did not wake

To happiness unthought of ? The inert
Were roused, and lively natures rapt away !

They who had fed their childhood upon dreams,

The play-fellows of fancy, who had made
All powers of swiftness, subtilty, and strength

Their ministers,—who in lordly wise had stirred

Among the grandest objects of the sense,
And dealt with whatsoever they found there

As if they had within some lurking right
To wield it ;—they, too, who of gentle mood

Had watched all gentle motions, and to these

Had fitted their own thoughts, schemers more mild,

And in the region of their peaceful selves ;—
Now was it that both found, the meek

and lofty
Did both find helpers to their hearts' desire,

And stuff at hand, plastic as they could wish,—

Were called upon to exercise their skill,
Not in Utopia,—subterranean fields,—

Or some secreted island, Heaven knows where !

But in the very world, which is the world
Of all of us,—the place where, in the end,

We find our happiness, or not at all !

Why should I not confess that Earth was then

To me, what an inheritance, new-fallen,
Seems, when the first time visited, to one
Who thither comes to find in it his home ?

He walks about and looks upon the spot
With cordial transport, moulds it and remoulds,

And is half pleased with things that are amiss,

'Twill be such joy to see them disappear.

An active partisan, I thus convoked
From every object pleasant circumstance

To suit my ends ; I moved among mankind

With genial feelings still predominant ;
When erring, erring on the better part,

And in the kinder spirit, placable,
Indulgent, as not unforfeited that men

See as they have been taught—Antiquity
Gives rights to error ; and aware, no less,

That throwing off oppression must be work

As well of License as of Liberty ;
And above all—for this was more than all—

Not caring if the wind did now and then
Blow keen upon an eminence that gave
Prospect so large into futurity ;
In brief, a child of Nature, as at first,
Diffusing only those affections wider
That from the cradle had grown up with
me,
And losing, in no other way than light
Is lost in light, the weak in the more
strong.

In the main outline, such it might be
said

Was my condition, till with open war
Britain opposed the liberties of France ;
This threw me first out of the pale of love ;
Soured and corrupted, upwards to the
source,

My sentiments ; was not, as hitherto,
A swallowing up of lesser things in great,
But change of them into their contraries ;
And thus a way was opened for mistakes
And false conclusions, in degree as grows
In kind more dangerous. What had
been a pride,
Was now a shame ; my likings and my
loves

Ran in new channels, leaving old ones
dry ;

And hence a blow that, in maturer age,
Would but have touched the judgment,
struck more deep

Into sensations near the heart : mean-
time,

As from the first, wild theories were
afloat,

To whose pretensions, sedulously urged,
I had but lent a careless ear, assured
That time was ready to set all things
right,

And that the multitude, so long op-
pressed,
Would be oppressed no more.

But when events
Brought less encouragement, and unto
these

The immediate proof of principles no
more

Could be entrusted, while the events
themselves,

Worn out in greatness, stripped of
novelty,

Less occupied the mind, and sentiments
Could through my understanding's
natural growth

No longer keep their ground, by faith
maintained

Of inward consciousness, and hope that
laid

Her hand upon her object—evidence
Safer, of universal application, such
As could not be impeached, was sought
elsewhere.

W.P.

But now, become oppressors in their
turn,

Frenchmen had changed a war of self-
defence

For one of conquest, losing sight of all
Which they had struggled for : up
mounted now,

Openly in the eye of earth and heaven,
The scale of liberty. I read her doom,
With anger vexed, with disappointment
sore,

But not dismayed, nor taking to the
shame

Of a false prophet. While resentment
Striving to hide, what nought could heal,
the wounds

Of mortified presumption, I adhered
More firmly to old tenets, and, to prove
Their temper, strained them more ; and
thus, in heat

Of contest, did opinions every day
Grow into consequence, till round my
mind

They clung, as if they were its life, nay
more,

The very being of the immortal soul.

This was the time, when, all things
tending fast

To depravation, speculative schemes—
That promised to abstract the hopes of
Man

Out of his feelings, to be fixed thenceforth
For ever in a purer element—

Found ready welcome. Tempting region
that

For Zeal to enter and refresh herself,
Where passions had the privilege to work,
And never hear the sound of their own
names.

But, speaking more in charity, the dream
Flattered the young, pleased with ex-
tremes, nor least

With that which makes our Reason's
naked self

The object of its fervour. What delight!
How glorious ! in self-knowledge and self-
rule,

To look through all the frailties of the
world,

And, with a resolute mastery shaking
off

Infirmities of nature, time, and place,
Build social upon personal Liberty,

Which, to the blind restraints of general
laws

Superior, magisterially adopts
One guide, the light of circumstances,
flashed

Upon an independent intellect.

Thus expectation rose again ; thus hope,
From her first ground expelled, grew
proud once more.

N N

Oft, as my thoughts were turned, to
 human kind,
 I scorned indifference; but, inflamed
 with thirst
 Of a secure intelligence, and sick
 Of other longing, I pursued what seemed
 A more exalted nature; wished that Man
 Should start out of his earthy, worm-
 like state,
 And spread abroad the wings of Liberty;
 Lord of himself, in undisturbed delight—
 A noble aspiration! yet I feel
 (Sustained by worthier as by wiser
 thoughts)
 The aspiration, nor shall ever cease
 To feel it;—but return we to our course.

Enough, 'tis true—could such a plea
 excuse
 Those aberrations—had the clamorous
 friends
 Of ancient Institutions said and done
 To bring disgrace upon their very names;
 Disgrace, of which, custom and written
 law,
 And sundry moral sentiments as props
 Or emanations of those institutes,
 Too justly bore a part. A veil had been
 Uplifted; why deceive ourselves? in
 sooth,
 'Twas even so: and sorrow for the man
 Who either had not eyes wherewith to
 see,
 Or, seeing, had forgotten! A strong
 shock
 Was given to old opinions; all men's
 minds
 Had felt its power, and mine was both
 let loose,
 Let loose and goaded. After what hath
 been
 Already said of patriotic love,
 Suffice it here to add, that, somewhat
 stern
 In temperament, withal a happy man,
 And therefore bold to look on painful
 things,
 Free likewise of the world, and thence
 more bold,
 I summoned my best skill, and toiled,
 intent
 To anatomise the frame of social life,
 Yea, the whole body of society
 Searched to its heart. Share with me,
 Friend! the wish
 That some dramatic tale, endued with
 shapes
 Livelier, and flinging out less guarded
 words
 Than suit the work we fashion, might
 set forth
 What then I learned, or think I learned,
 of truth,

And the errors into which I fell, betrayed
 By present objects, and by reasonings
 false

From their beginnings, inasmuch as drawn
 Out of a heart that had been turned aside
 From Nature's way by outward accidents,
 And which was thus confounded, more
 and more

Misguided, and misleading. So I fared,
 Dragging all precepts, judgments, max-
 ims, creeds,

Like culprits to the bar; calling the mind,
 Suspiciously, to establish in plain day
 Her titles and her honours; now be-
 lieving,

Now disbelieving; endlessly perplexed
 With impulse, motive, right and wrong,
 the ground

Of obligation, what the rule and whence
 The sanction; till, demanding formal
 proof,

And seeking it in every thing, I lost
 All feeling of conviction, and, in fine,
 Sick, wearied out with contrarities,
 Yielded up moral questions in despair.

This was the crisis of that strong
 disease,

This the soul's last and lowest ebb; I
 drooped,

Deeming our blessed reason of least use
 Where wanted most: "The lordly
 attributes

Of will and choice," I bitterly exclaimed,
 "What are they but a mockery of a
 Being

Who hath in no concerns of his a test
 Of good and evil; knows not what to
 fear

Or hope for, what to covet or to shun;
 And who, if those could be discerned,
 would yet

Be little profited, would see, and ask
 Where is the obligation, to enforce?

And, to acknowledged law rebellious, still
 As selfish passion urged, would act amiss:
 The dupe of folly, or the slave of crime."

Depressed, bewildered thus, I did not
 walk

With scoffers, seeking light and gay re-
 venge

From indiscriminate laughter, nor sate
 down

In reconciliation with my sister, waste
 Of intellect; such sloth I could not brook,
 (Too well I loved, in that my spring of
 life,

Pains-taking thoughts, and truth, their
 dear reward)

But turned to abstract science, and there
 sought

Work for the reasoning faculty enthroned

Where the disturbances of space and time—

Whether in matters various, properties
Inherent, or from human will and power
Derived—find no admission. Then it was—

Thanks to the bounteous Giver of all good !—

That the beloved Sister in whose sight
Those days were passed, now speaking
• in a voice

Of sudden admonition—like a brook
That did but cross a lonely road, and now
Is seen, heard, felt, and caught at every turn,

Companion never lost through many a league—

Maintained for me a saving intercourse
With my true self : for, though • ac-
• cused and changed

Much, as it seemed, I was no further changed

Than as a clouded and a wailing moan :
She whispered still that brightness would return

She, in the midst of all, preserved me still
A Poet, made me seek beneath that name,
And that alone, my office upon earth ;
And, lastly, as hereafter will be shown,
If willing audience fail not, Nature's self,
By all varieties of human love
Assisted, led me back through opening day

To those sweet counsels between head and heart

Whence grew that genuine knowledge,
fraught with peace,

Which, through the later sinkings of this cause,

Hath still upheld me, and upholds me now

In the catastrophe (for so they dream,
And nothing less), when, finally to close
And seal up all the gains of France, a Pope

• Is summoned in, to crown an Emperor—
This last opprobrium, when we see a people,

That once looked up in faith, as if to Heaven

For manna, take a lesson from the dog
Returning to his vomit ; when the sun
That rose in splendour, was alive, and moved

In exultation with a living pomp
Of clouds—• glory's natural retinue—
Hath dropped all functions by the gods bestowed,

And, turned into a gongaw, a machine,
Sets like an Opera phantom.

Thus, O Friend !
Through times of honour and through times of shame

Descending, have I faithfully retraced
The perturbations of a youthful mind
Under a long-lived storm of great events—
A story destined for thy ear, who now,
Among the fallen of nations, dost abide
Where Ætna, over hill and valley, casts
His shadow stretching towards Syracuse,
The city of Timoleon ! Righteous

• Heaven !
How are the mighty prostrated ! They first,

They first of all that breathe should have
• awakened

When the great voice was heard from out the tombs

Of ancient heroes. If I suffered grief
For ill-requited France, by many deemed
A trifle only in her proudest day :

Have been distressed to think of what she once

Promised; now is ; a far more sober cause
Thine eyes must see of sorrow in a land,
To the reanimating influence lost
Of memory, to virtue lost and hope.

Though with the wreck of loftier years
bestrewn.

But indignation works where hope is not,

And thou, O Friend ! wilt be refreshed.
There is

One great society alone on earth :
The noble Living and the noble Dead.

Thine be such converse strong and sanative,

A ladder for thy spirit to reascend
To health and joy and pure contented-
ness :

To me the grief confined, that thou art gone

From this last spot of earth, where Free-
dom now

Stands single in her only sanctuary ;
A lonely wanderer art gone, by pain
Compelled and sickness, at this latter day,
This sorrowful reverse for all mankind.

I feel for thee, must utter what I feel :
The sympathies erewhile in part dis-
charged,

Gather afresh, and will have vent again :
My own delights do scarcely seem to me
My own delights ; the lordly Alps them-
selves,

Those rosy peaks, from which the Morn-
ing looks

Abroad on many nations, are no more
For me that image of pure gladness
Which they were wont to be. Through
kindred scenes,

For purpose, at a time, how different !
Thou tak'st thy way, carrying the heart
and soul

That Nature gives to Poets, now by
thought:
Matured, and in the summer of their
strength.

Oh! wrap him in your shades, ye giant
woods, [field]

On Etna's side; and thou, O flowery
Of Enna! is there not some nook of thine,
From the first play-time of the infant
world

Kept sacred to restorative delight,
When from afar invoked by anxious love?

Child of the mountains, among shep-
herds reared,

Ere yet familiar with the classic page,
I learnt to dream of Sicily; and lo,

The gloom, that, but a moment past, was
deepened

At thy command, at her command gives
way;

A pleasant promise, wafted from her
shores,

Comes o'er my heart: in fancy I behold
Her seas yet smiling, her once happy
vales; [name]

Nor can my tongue give utterance to a
Of note belonging to that honoured isle,
Philosopher or Bard, Empedocles,
Or Archimedes, pure abstracted soul!

That doth not yield a solace to my grief:
And, O Theocritus,¹ so far have some
Prevailed among the powers of heaven
and earth,

By their endowments, good or great, that
they

Have had, as thou reportest, miracles
Wrought for them in old times: yea,
not unmoved,

When thinking on my own beloved friend,

¹ Theocrit. Idyll. vii. 78.—Ed.

I hear thee tell how bees with honey fed
Divine Comates, by his impious lord
Within a chest imprisoned; how they
came

Ladea from blooming grove or flowery
field,

And fed him there, alive, month after
month,

Because the goatherd, blessed man! had
lips

Wet with the Muses' nectar.

Thus I song the
The pensive moments by this calm fire-
side,

And find a thousand bounteous images
To cheer the thoughts of those I love, and
mine.

Our prayers have been accepted; thou
wilt stand

On Etna's summit, above earth and sea,
Triumphant, winning from the invaded
heavens

Thoughts without bound, magnificent
designs,

Worthy of poets who attuned their harps
In wood or echoing cave, for discipline
Of heroes; or, in reverence to the gods,
Mid temples, served by sapient priests,
and choirs

Of virgins crowned with roses. Not in
vain

Those temples, where they in their ruins
yet

Survive for inspiration, shall attract
Thy solitary steps: and on the brink
Thou wilt recline of pastoral Arethuse;
Or, if that fountain be in truth no more,
Then, near some other spring—which,
by the name

Thou gratest, willingly deceived—
I see thee linger a glad votary,
And not a captive pining for his home.

BOOK TWELFTH

IMAGINATION AND TASTE, HOW IMPAIRED AND RESTORED

Long time have human ignorance and
guilt

Detained us, on what spectacles of woe
Compelled to look, and inwardly op-
pressed

With sorrow, disappointment, vexing
thoughts,

Confusion of the judgment, zeal decayed,
And, lastly, utter loss of hope itself
And things to hope for! Not with these
began

Our song, and not with these our song
must end,—

Ye motions of delight, that haunt the
sides [airs,

Of the green hills; ye breezes and soft
Whose subtle intercourse with breathing
flowers,

Feelingly watched, might teach Man's
haughty race

How without injury to take, to give
Without offence; ye who, as if to show

The wondrous influence of power gently
used,

Bend the complying heads of lordly pines,
And, with a touch, shift the stupendous
clouds

Through the whole compass of the sky;
ye brooks,

Muttering along the stones, a busy noise
By day, a quiet sound in silent night ;
Ye waves, that out of the great deep steal
forth

In a calm hour to kiss the pebbly shore.
Not mute, and then retire, fearing no
storm ;

And you, ye groves, whose ministry it is
To interpose the covert of your shades,
Even as a sleep, between the heart of man
And outward troubles, between man
himself,

Not seldom, and his own uneasy heart :
Oh ! that I had a music and a voice
Harmonious as your own, that I might
tell

What ye have done for me. The morning
shines,

Nor heedeth Man's perverseness ; Spring
returns,—

I saw the Spring return, and could re-
joice,

In common with the children of her love,
Piping on boughs, or sporting on fresh
fields ;

Or boldly seeking pleasure nearer heaven
On wings that navigate cerulean skies.
So neither were complacency, nor peace,
Nor tender yearnings, wanting for my
good

Through these distracted times ; if
Nature still
Glorying, I found a counterpoise in her.
Which, when the spirit of evil reached its
height

Maintained for me a secret happiness.

This narrative, my Friend ! hath
chiefly told

Of intellectual power, fostering love,
Dispensing truth, and, over men and
things,

Where reason yet might hesitate, diffus-
ing

Prophetic sympathies of genial faith :
So was I favoured—such my happy lot—

Until that natural graciousness of mind
Gave way to overpressure from the times
And their disastrous issues. What
availed,

When spells forbade the voyager to land,
That fragrant notice of a pleasant shore
Wafted, at intervals, from many a bower
Of blissful gratitude and fearless love ?
Dare I leave that wish was mine to see,
And hope that future times would surely
see,

The man to come, parted, as by a gulph,
From him who had been ; that I could
no more

Trust the elevation which had made me
one

With the great family that still survives

To illuminate the abyss of ages past,
Sage, warrior, patriot, hero ; for it
seemed

That their best virtues were not free from
taint

Of something false and weak, that could
not stand

The open eye of Reason. Then I said,

“ On to the Poets, they will speak to thee

More perfectly of purer creatures ;—yet

If reason be nobility in man,

Can aught be more ignoble than the man

Whom they delight in, blinded as he is

By prejudice, the miserable slave

Of low ambition or distempered love ? ”

In such strange passion, if I may once

more
Review the past, I warred against myself—

A bigot to a new idolatry—

Like a cowed monk who hath forsworn
the world,

Zealously laboured to cut off my heart
From all the sources of her former
strength ;

And as, by simple waving of a wand,

The wizard instantaneously dissolves

Palace or grove, even so could I unsoul

As readily by syllogistic words

Those mysteries of being which have

made,

And shall continue evermore to make,

Of the whole human race one brother-
hood.

What wonder, then, if, to a mind so far

Perverted, even the visible Universe

Fell under the dominion of a taste

Less spiritual, with microscopic view

Was scanned, as I had scanned the moral
world ?

O Soul of Nature ! excellent and fair !

That didst rejoice with me, with whom I,

too,

Rejoiced through early youth, before the

winds

And roaring waters, and in lights and

shades

That marched and countermarched

about the hills

In glorious apparition, Powers on whom

I daily waited, now all eye and now

All ear ; but never long without the heart

Employed, and man's unfolding intellects

O Soul of Nature ! that, by laws divine

Sustained and governed, still dost over-
flow

With an impassioned life, what feeble

ones

Walk on this earth ! how feeble have I

been

When thou wert in thy strength ! Nor

this through stroke

Of human suffering, such as justifies /
Remissness and inaptitude of mind,
But through presumption; even in
pleasure pleased

Unworthily, disliking here, and there
Liking; by rules of mimic art transferred
To things above all art; but more,—for
this,

Although a strong infection of the age,
Was never much my habit—giving way
To a comparison of scene with scene,
Bent overmuch on superficial things,
Pampering myself with meagre novelties
Of colour and proportion; to the moods
Of time and season, to the moral power.
The affections and the spirit of the place,
Insensible. Nor only did the love
Of sitting thus in judgment interrupt
My deeper feelings, but another cause,
More subtle and less easily explained,
That almost seems inherent in the
creature.

A twofold frame of body and of mind.
I speak in recollection of a time
When the bodily eye, in every stage of
life

The most despotic of our senses, gained
Such strength in me as often held my
mind

In absolute dominion. Gladly here,
Entering upon abstruser argument,
Could I endeavour to unfold the means
Which Nature studiously employs to
thwart

This tyranny, summons all the senses
each

To counteract the other, and themselves,
And makes them all, and the objects with
which all

Are conversant, subservient in their turn
To the great ends of Liberty and Power.
But leave we this: enough that my de-
lights

(Such as they were) were sought insatiably.
Vivid the transport, vivid though not
profound;

I roamed from hill to hill, from rock to
rock,

Still craving combinations of new forms,
New pleasure, wider empire for the sight,
Proud of her own endowments, and re-
joiced

To lay the inner faculties asleep.
Amid the turns and counterturns, the
strife

And various trials of our complex being,
As we grow up, such thralldom of that
sense

Seems hard to shun. And yet I knew
a maid,

A young enthusiast, who escaped these
bonds;

Her eye was not the mistress of her heart;

Far less did rules prescribed by passive
taste.

Or barren intermeddling subtleties,
Perplex her mind; but, wise as women
are

When genial circumstance hath favoured
them,

She welcomed what was given, and
craved no more;

Whate'er the scene presented to her view
That was the best, to that she was
attuned

By her benign simplicity of life,
And through a perfect happiness of soul,
Whose variegated feelings were in this
Sisters, that they were each some new
delight.

Birds in the bower, and lambs in the
green field,

Could they have known her, would have
loved; methought

Her very presence such a sweetness
breathed,

That flowers, and trees, and even the
silent hills,

And every thing she looked off, should
have had

An intimation how she bore herself
Towards them and to all creatures. God
delights

In such a being; for, her common
thoughts

Are piety, her life is gratitude.

Even like this maid, before I was called
forth

From the retirement of my native hills,
I loved whate'er I saw: nor lightly
loved,

But most intensely; never dreamt of
aught

More grand, more fair, more exquisitely
framed

Than those few nooks to which my happy
feet
Were limited. I had not at that time

Lived long enough, nor in the least sur-
vived

The first diviner influence of this world,
As it appears to unaccustomed eyes.

Worshipping them among the depth of
things,

As piety ordained; could I submit
To measured admiration, or to aught

That should preclude humility and love?
I felt, observed, and pondered; did not

judge,
Yea, never thought of judging; with
the gift

Of all this glory filled and satisfied.
And afterwards, when through the gor-
geous Alps

Roaming, I carried with me the same
heart:

In truth, the degradation—howsoe'er
 Induced, effect, in whatsoe'er degree,
 Of custom that prepares a partial scale
 In which the little oft outweighs the
 great;
 Or any other cause that hath been
 named;
 Or lastly, aggravated by the times
 And their impassioned sounds, which
 well might make
 The milder minstrelsy of rural scenes
 Inaudible—was transient; I had known
 Too forcibly, too early in my life,
 Visitings of imaginative power
 For this to last: I shook the habit off,
 Entirely and for ever, and again
 In Nature's presence stood, as now I
 stand,
 A sensitive being, a *creative* soul.

There are in our existence spots of time,
 That with distinct pre-eminence retain
 A renovating virtue, whence, depressed
 By false opinion and contentious thought,
 Or aught of heavier or more deadly
 weight,
 In trivial occupations, and the round
 Of ordinary intercourse, our minds
 Are nourished and invisibly repaired;
 A virtue, by which pleasure is enhanced,
 That penetrates, enables us to mount,
 When high, more high, and lifts us up
 when fallen.
 This efficacious spirit chiefly lurks
 Among those passages of life that give
 Profoundest knowledge to what point,
 and how,
 The mind is lord and master—outward
 sense
 The obedient servant of her will. Such
 moments
 Are scattered everywhere, taking their
 date
 From our first childhood. I remember
 well,
 That once, while yet my inexperienced
 hand
 Could scarcely hold a bridle, with proud
 hopes
 I mounted, and we journeyed towards the
 hills:
 An ancient servant of my father's house
 Was with me, my encourager and guide:
 We had not travelled long, ere some mis-
 chance
 Disjoined me from my comrade; and,
 through fear
 Dismounting, down the rough and stony
 moor
 I led my horse, and, stumbling on, at
 length
 Came to a bottom, where in former times
 A murderer had been hung in iron chains.

The gibbet-mast had mouldered down,
 the bones
 And iron case were gone; but on the turf,
 Hard by, soon after that fell deed was
 wrought,
 Some unknown hand had carved the
 murderer's name.
 The monumental letters were inscribed
 In times long past; but still, from year
 to year,
 By superstition of the neighbourhood,
 The grass is cleared away, and to this
 hour
 The characters are fresh and visible:
 A casual glance had shown them, and I
 fled,
 Faltering and faint, and ignorant of the
 road:
 Then, reascending the bare common, saw
 A naked pool that lay beneath the hills,
 The beacon on the summit, and, more
 near,
 A girl, who bore a pitcher on her head,
 And seemed with difficult steps to force
 her way
 Against the blowing wind. It was, in
 truth,
 An ordinary sight; but I should need
 Colours and words that are unknown to
 man,
 To paint the visionary dreariness
 Which, while I looked all round for my
 lost guide,
 Invested moorland waste, and naked
 pool,
 The beacon crowning the lone eminence,
 The female and her garments vexed and
 tossed
 By the strong wind. When, in the
 blessed hours
 Of early love, the loved one at my side,
 I roamed, in daily presence of this scene,
 Upon the naked pool and dreary crags,
 And on the melancholy beacon, fell
 A spirit of pleasure and youth's golden
 gleam;
 And think ye not with radiance more
 sublime
 For these remembrances, and for the
 power.
 They had left behind? So feeling
 comes in aid
 Of feeling, and diversity of strength
 Attends us, if but once we have been
 strong.
 Oh! mystery of man, from what a depth
 Proceed thy honours. I am lost, but see
 In simple childhood something of the
 base
 On which thy greatness stands; but
 this I feel,
 That from thyself it comes, that thou
 must give;

Else never canst receive. The days gone
by

Return upon me almost from the dawn
Of life : the hiding-places of man's power
Open ; I would approach them, but they
close.

I see by glimpses now ; when age comes
on,

May scarcely see at all ; and I would give.
While yet we may, as far as words can
give,

Substance and life to what I feel, enshrining.

Such is my hope, the spirit of the Past
For future restoration.—Yet another
Of these memorials :—

One Christmas-tide,
On the glad eve of its dear holidays,
Feverish, and tired, and restless, I went
forth

Into the fields, impatient for the sight
Of those led palfreys that should bear us
home ;

My brothers and myself. There rose a
crag,

That, from the meeting-point of two high-
ways

Ascending, overlooked them both, far
stretched ;

Thither, uncertain on which road to fix
My expectation, thither I repaired.

Scout-like, and gained the summit ;
'twas a day

Tempestuous, dark, and wild, and on the
grass

I sat half-sheltered by a naked wall ;
Upon my right hand couched a single
sheep,

Upon my left a blasted hawthorn stood ;
With those companions at my side, I
watched,

Straining my eyes intensely, as the mist
Gave intermitting prospect of the coast
And plain beneath. Ere we to school
returned,—

That dreary time,—ere we had been ten
days

Sojourners in my father's house, he died ;
And I and my three brothers, orphans
then,

Followed his body to the grave. The
event,

With all the sorrow that it brought,
appeared.

A chastisement ; and when I called to
mind

That day so lately past, when from the
crag
I looked in such anxiety of hope ;

With trite reflections of morality,
Yet in the deepest passion, I bowed low
To God, Who thus corrected my desires ;

And, afterwards, the wind and sleety
rain,

And all the business of the elements,
The single sheep, and the one blasted tree,
And the bleak music from that old stone
wall,

The noise of wood and water, and the mist
That on the line of each of those two
roads

Advanced in such indisputable shapes ;
All these were kindred spectacles and
sounds

To which I oft repaired, and thence would
drink,

As at a fountain ; and on winter nights,
Down to this very time, when storm and
rain

Beat on my roof, or, haply, at noon-day,
While in a grove I walk, whose lofty trees,
Laden with summer's thickest foliage,
rock

In a strong wind, some working of the
spirit,

Some inward agitations thence are
brought,

Whate'er their office, whether to beguile
Thoughts over busy in the course they
took,

Or animate an hour of vacant ease.

BOOK THIRTEENTH

IMAGINATION AND TASTE, HOW IMPAIRED AND RESTORED

CONCLUDED

FROM Nature doth emotion come, and
moods

Of calmness equally are Nature's gift :
This is her glory ; these two attributes
Are sister horns that constitute her
strength.

Hence Genius, born to thrive by inter-
change

Of peace and excitement, finds in her

His best and purest friend ; from her
receives

That energy by which he seeks the truth,
From her that happy stillness of the mind

Which fits him to receive it when un-
sought.

Such benefit the humblest intellects
Partake of, each in their degree ; 'tis
mine

To speak, what I myself have known and
Smooth task ! for words find easy way,
inspired

By gratitude, and confidence in truth.
Long time in search of knowledge did I
range

The field of human life, in heart and
mind

Benighted; but, the dawn beginning
now

To re-appear, 'twas proved that not in
vain

I had been taught to reverence a Power
That is the visible quality and shape

And image of right reason; that matures
Her processes by steadfast laws; gives

birth
To no impatient or fallacious hopes,
No heat of passion or excessive zeal,

No vain conceits; provokes to no quick
turns

• Of self-applauding intellect: but traws
To meekness, and exalts by humble faith:

Holds up before the mind intoxicate
With present objects, and the busy

dance
Of things that pass away, a temperate

show
Of objects that endure; and by this

course
Disposes her, when overfondly set
On throwing off incumbrances, to seek

In man, and in the frame of social life,
Whatever there is desirable and good

Of kindred permanence, unchanged in
form

And function, or, through strict vicissi-
tude

Of life and death, revolving. Above all
Were re-established now those watchful

thoughts,
Which, seeing little worthy or sublime
In what the Historian's pen so much de-
lights

To blazon—power and energy detached
From moral purpose—early tutored me

To look with feelings of fraternal love
Upon the unassuming things that hold

A silent station in this beauteous world

Thus moderated, thus composed, I
found

Once more in Man an object of delight,
Of pure imagination, and of love;

And, as the horizon of my mind enlarged,
Again I took the intellectual eye

For my instructor, studious more to see,
Great truths, than touch and handle

little ones.
Knowledge was given accordingly; my

trust
Became more firm in feelings that had
stood

The test of such a trial; clearer far
My sense of excellence—of right and

wrong:

The promise of the present time retired
Into its true proportion; sanguine
schemes,

Ambitious projects, pleased me less;
I sought

For present good in life's familiar face,
And built thereon my hopes of good to
come.

With settling judgments now of what
would last

And what would disappear; prepared
to find

Presumption, folly, madness, in the men
Who thrust themselves upon the passive

world
As Rulers of the world; to see in these,
Even when the public welfare is their aim,

Plans without thought, or built on
theories

Vague and unsound: and having brought
the books

Of modern statistics to their proper test,
Life, human life, with all its sacred

claims
Of sex and age, and heaven-descended

rights,
Mortal, or those beyond the reach of

death;
And having thus discerned how dire a

thing
Is worshipped in that idol proudly named
"The Wealth of Nations," where alone

that wealth
Is lodged, and how increased; and hav-
ing gained

A more judicious knowledge of the worth
And dignity of individual man,

No composition of the brain, but man
Of whom we read, the man whom we

behold
With our own eyes—I could not but

inquire—
Not with less interest than heretofore,
But greater, though in spirit more sub-
dued—

Why is this glorious creature to be
found

One only in ten thousand? What one
is,

Why may not millions be? What bars
are thrown

By Nature in the way of such a hope?
Our animal appetites and daily wants,

Are these obstructions insurmountable?
If not, then others vanish into air.

"Inspect the basis of the social pile:
Inquire," said I, "how much of mental

power
And genuine virtue they possess who live
By bodily toil, labour exceeding far

Their due proportion, under all the
weight

Of that injustice which upon ourselves
Ourselves entail." Such estimate / to
frame

I chiefly looked (what need to look
beyond?)

Among the natural abodes of men,

Fields with their rural works; recalled
to mind

My earliest notices; with these com-
pared

The observations made in later youth,
And to that day continued.—For, the
time

Had never been when throes of mighty
Nations

And the world's tumult unto me could
yield,

How far soe'er transported and possessed,
Full measure of content; but still I
craved

An intermingling of distinct regards
And truths of individual sympathy
Nearer ourselves. Such often might be
gleaned

From the great City, else it must have
proved

To me a heart-depressing wilderness;
But much was wanting: therefore did
I turn

To you, ye pathways, and ye lonely
roads;

Sought you enriched with everything I
prized,

With human kindnesses and simple joys.

Oh! next to one dear state of bliss,
vouchsafed

Alas! to few in this untoward world,
The bliss of walking daily in life's prime
Through field or forest with the maid we
love,

While yet our hearts are young, while yet
we breathe

Nothing but happiness, in some lone
nook,

Deep vale, or any where, the home of
both,

From which it would be misery to stir:
Oh! next to such enjoyment of our
youth,

In my esteem, next to such dear delight,
Was that of wandering on from day to
day

Where I could meditate in peace, and
cull

Knowledge that step by step might lead
me on

To wisdom; or, as lightsome as a bird
Wafted upon the wind from distant lands,

Sing notes of greeting to strange fields or
groves,

Which lacked not voice to welcome me
in turn:

And, when that pleasant toil had ceased
to please,

Converse with men, where if we meet a
face

We almost meet a friend, on naked
heaths

With long long ways before, by cottage
bench,

Or well-spring where the weary traveller
rests.

Who doth not love to follow with his
eye

The windings of a public way? the sight,
Familiar object as it is, hath wrought

On my imagination since the morn
Of childhood, when a disappearing line,

One daily present to my eyes, that
crossed

The naked summit of a far-off hill
Beyond the limits that my feet had trod,

Was like an invitation into space
Boundless, or guide into eternity.

Yes, something of the grandeur which
invests

The mariner, who sails the rearing sea
Through storm and darkness, early in my
mind

Surrounded, too, the wanderers of the
earth;

Grandeur as much, and loveliness far
more.

Awed have I been by strolling Bedlamites;
From many other uncouth vagrants

(passed
in fear) have walked with quicker step;
but why

Take note of this? When I began to
enquire,

To watch and question those I met, and
speak

Without reserve to them, the lonely roads
Were open schools in which I daily read

With most delight the passions of man-
kind,

Whether by words, looks, sighs, or tears,
revealed;

There saw into the depth of human souls,
Souls that appear to have no depth at all

To careless eyes. And—now convinced
at heart

How little those formalities, to which
With overweening trust alone we give

The name of Education, have to do
With real feeling and just sense; how vain

A correspondence with the talking world
Proves to the most; and called to make

good search

If man's estate, by doom of Nature yoked
With toil, be therefore yoked with ignor-
ance;

If virtue be indeed so hard to rear,
And intellectual strength so rare a boon—

I prized such walks still more, for there
 I found
 Hope to my hope, and to my pleasure
 peace
 And steadiness, and healing and repose
 To every angry passion. There I heard,
 From mouths of men obscure and lowly,
 truths
 Replete with honour ; sounds in unison
 With loftiest promises of good and fair,

There are who think that strong affection,
 love
 Known by whatever name, is falsely
 deemed
 A gift, to use a term which they would
 use,

Of vulgar nature ; that its growth requires
 Retirement ; leisure, language purified ;
 By manners studied and elaborate :
 That whoso feels such passion in its
 strength
 Must live within the very light and air
 Of courteous usages refined by art.
 True is it, where oppression worse than
 death

Salutes the being at his birth, where grace
 Of culture hath been utterly unknown,
 And poverty and labour in excess
 From day to day pre-occupy the ground
 Of the affections, and to Nature's self
 Oppose a deeper nature ; there, indeed,
 Love cannot be ; nor does it thrive with
 ease

Among the close and overcrowded haunts
 Of cities, where the human heart is sick,
 And the eye feeds it not, and cannot feed.
 —Yes, in those wanderings deeply did I
 feel

How we mislead each other : above all,
 How books mislead us, seeking their
 reward

From judgments of the wealthy Few,
 who see

By artificial lights ; how they debase
 The Many for the pleasure of those Few ;
 Effeminately level down the truth
 To certain general notions, for the sake
 Of being understood at once, or else
 Through want of better knowledge in the
 heads

That framed them ; flattering self-con-
 ceit with words.

That, while they most ambitiously seek
 forth

Extrinsic differences, the outward marks
 Whereby society has parted man
 From man, neglect the universal heart.

Here, calling up to mind what then I
 saw,

A youthful traveller, and see daily now
 In the familiar circuit of my home,

Here might I pause, and bend in rever-
 ence

To Nature, and the power of human
 minds,

To men as they are men within them-
 selves.

How oft high service is performed with-
 in,
 When all the external man is rude in
 show.—

Not like a temple, rich with pomp and
 gold.

But a mere mountain chapel, that pro-
 tects

Its simple worshippers from sun and
 shower.

Of these, said I, shall be my song : of
 these,

If future years mature me for the task,
 Will I record the praises, making verse

Deal boldly with substantial things ; in
 truth

And sanctity of passion, speak of these,
 That justice may be done, obeisance paid

Where it is due : thus haply shall I teach,
 Inspire ; through unadulterated ears

Pour rapture, tenderness, and hope,—
 my theme

No other than the very heart of man,
 As found among the best of those who
 live,

Not unexalted by religious faith,
 Nor uninformed by books, good books,

though few.

In Nature's presence : thence may I
 select

Sorrow, that is not sorrow, but delight ;
 And miserable love, that is not pain

To hear of, for the glory that redounds
 Therefrom to human kind, and what we
 are.

Be mine to follow with no timid step
 Where knowledge leads me : it shall be

my pride

That I have dared to tread this holy
 ground,

Speaking no dream, but things oracular :
 Matter not lightly to be heard by those

Who to the letter of the outward promise
 Do read the invisible soul : by men

adroit

In speech, and for communion with the
 world

Accomplished ; minds whose faculties
 are then

Most active when they are most eloquent,
 And elevated most when most admired.

Men may be found of other mould than
 these,

Who are their own upholders, to them-
 selves

Encouragement, and energy, and will,
 Expressing liveliest thoughts in lively
 words

As native passion dictates. Others, too,
There are among the walks of homely life
Still higher, men for contemplation
framed,

Shy, and unpractised in the strife of
phrase;

Meek men, whose very souls perhaps
would sink

Beneath them, summoned to such inter-
course :

Theirs is the language of the heavens, the
power, [joy :

The thought, the image, and the silent
Words are but under-agents in their souls ;

When they are grasping with their great-
est strength,

They do not breathe among them : this I
speak

In gratitude to God, Who feeds our hearts
For His own service ; knoweth, loveth us,
When we are unregarded by the world

Also, about this time did I receive
Convictions still more strong than here-
tofore,

Not only that the inner frame is good,
And graciously composed, but that, no
less,

Nature for all conditions wants not power
To consecrate, if we have eyes to see,
The outside of her creatures, and to
breathe

Grandeur upon the very humblest face
Of human life. I felt that the array
Of act and circumstance, and visible
form,

Is mainly to the pleasure of the mind
What passion makes them ; that mean-
while the forms

Of Nature have a passion in themselves,
That intermingles with those works of
man

To which she summons him ; although
the works

Be mean, have nothing lofty of their own ;
And that the Genius of the Poet hence
May boldly take his way among mankind
Wherever Nature leads ; that he hath
stood

By Nature's side among the men of old,
And so shall stand for ever. Dearest
Friend !

If thou partake the animating faith
That Poets, even as Prophets, each with

Connected in a mighty scheme of truth,
Have each his own peculiar faculty,
Heaven's gift, a sense that fits him to
perceive

Objects unseen before, thou wilt not
blame

The humblest of this band who dares to
hope

That unto him hath also been vouchsafed
An insight that in some sort he possesses,
A privilege whereby a work of his,

Proceeding from a source of untaught
things,

Creative and enduring, may become
A power like one of Nature's. To a hope

Not less ambitious once among the wilds
Of Sarum's Plain, my youthful spirit was
raised :

There, as I ranged at will the pastoral
downs

Trackless and smooth, or paced the bare
white roads

Lengthening in solitude their dreary line,
Time with his retinue of ages fled

Backwards, nor checked his flight until I
saw

Our dim ancestral Past in vision clear ;
Saw multitudes of men, and, here and
there,

A single Briton clothed in wolf-skin vest,
With shield and stone-axe, stride across
the wold ;

The voice of spears was heard, the ratt-
ling spear

Shaken by arms of mighty bone, in
strength,

Long mouldered, of barbaric majesty.
I called on Darkness—but before the
word

Was uttered, midnight darkness seemed
to take

All objects from my sight ; and lo !
again

The Desert visible by dismal flames ;
It is the sacrificial altar, fed

With living men—how deep the groans !
the voice

Of those that crowd the giant wicker
thrills

The monumental hillocks, and the pomp
Is, for both worlds, the living and the
dead.

At other moments—(for through that
wide waste

Three summer days I roamed) where'er
the Plain

Was figured o'er with circles, lines, or
mounds,

That yet survive, a work, as some divine,
Shaped by the Druids, so to represent

Their knowledge of the heavens, and
image forth

The constellations—*genely* was I charmed
Into a waking dream, a reverie

That, with believing eyes, where'er I
turned,

Beheld long-bearded teachers, with white
wands

Uplifted, pointing to the starry sky,
Alternately, and plain below, while
breath

Of music swayed their motions, and the
waste
Rejoiced with them and ^{me} in those
sweet sounds.

This for the past, and things that may
be viewed
Or fancied in the obscurity of years
From monumental hints: and thou, O
Friend!
Pleased with some 'unpremeditated'
strains
That served those wanderings to beguile,
hast said
That then and there my mind had exer-
cised
Upon the vulgar forms of present things,
The actual world of our familiar days,
Yet higher-power; had caught from
them a tone,
An image, and a character, by book
Not hitherto reflected. Call we this
A partial judgment—and yet why? for
then

We were as strangers; and I may not
^{speak}
Thus wrongfully of verse, however rude,
Which on thy young imagination,
trained
In the great City, broke like light from
Moreover, each man's Mind is to herself
Witness and judge: and I remember
well
That in life's every-day appearances
I seemed about this time to gain clear
sight
Of a new world—a world, too, that was
fit
To be transmitted, and to other eyes
Made visible; as ruled by those fixed
laws
Whence spiritual dignity originates,
Which do both give it being and maintain
A balance, an ennobling interchange
Of action from without and from within;
The excellence, pure function, and best
power
Both of the object seen, and eye that sees.

BOOK FOURTEENTH

CONCLUSION

IN one of those excursions (may they ne'er
Fode from remembrance!) through the
Northern tracts
Of Cambria ranging with a youthful
friend,
I left Bethgeleit's huts at couching-time,
And westward took my way, to see the
sun
Rise, from the top of Snowdon. To the
door
Of a rude cottage at the mountain's base
We came, and roused the shepherd who
attends
The adventurous stranger's steps, a trusty
guide;
Then, cheered by short refreshment,
sallied forth.
It was a close, warm, breezeless sum-
mer night.
Wan, dull, and glaring, with a dripping
fog
Low-hung and thick that covered all the
sky;
But, undiscouraged, we began to climb
The mountain-side. The mist soon girt
us round.
And, after ordinary travellers' talk
With our conductor, pensively we sank
Each into commerce with his private
thoughts:
Thus did we breast the ascent, and by
myself

Was nothing either seen or heard that
checked
Those musings or diverted, save that
once
The shepherd's lurcher, who, among the
crags,
Had to his joy unearthed a hedgehog,
teased
His coiled-up-prey with barkings turbu-
lent.
This small adventure, for even such it
seemed
In that wild place and at the dead of
night,
Being over and forgotten, on we wound
In silence as before. With forehead bent
Earthward, as if in opposition set
Against an enemy, I panted up
With eager pace, and no less eager
thoughts.
Thus might we wear a midnight hour
away,
Ascending at loose distance each from
each,
And I, as chanced, the foremost of the
band;
When at my feet the ground appeared to
brighten,
And with a step or two seemed brighter
still;
Nor was time given to ask or learn the
cause,
For instantly a light upon the turf
Fell like a flash, and lo! as I looked up,
The Moon hung naked in a firmament

Of azure without cloud, and at my feet
 Rested a silent sea of hoary mist.

A hundred hills their dusky backs upheaved

All over this still ocean : and beyond,
 Far, far beyond, the solid vapours stretched,

In headlands, tongues, and promontory shapes.

Into the main Atlantic, that appeared
 To dwindle, and give up his majesty.

Usurped, upon far as the sight could reach.

Not so the ethereal vault : encroachment none

Was there, nor loss, only the inferior stars

Had disappeared, or shed a fainter light
 In the clear presence of the full-orbed Moon.

Who, from her sovereign elevation, gazed
 Upon the billowy ocean, as it lay

All meek and silent, save that through
 a rift—

Not distant from the shore whereon we stood,

A fixed, abysmal, gloomy, breathing-place—

Mounted the roar of waters, torrents, streams

Innumerable, roaring with one voice !

Heard over earth and sea, and, in that hour,

For so it seemed, felt by the starry heavens.

When into air had partially dissolved
 That vision, given to spirits of the night
 And three chance human wanderers, in calm thought

Reflected, it appeared to me the type
 Of a majestic intellect, its acts
 And its possessions, what it has and craves.

What in itself it is, and would become.
 There I beheld the emblem of a mind
 That feeds upon infinity, that broods
 Over the dark abyss, intent to hear
 Its voices issuing forth to silent light
 In one continuous stream ; a mind sustained

By recognitions of transcendent power,
 In sense conducting to ideal form.
 In soul of more than mortal privilege.

One function, above all, of such a mind
 Had Nature shadowed there, by putting forth.

'Mid circumstances awful and sublime,
 That mutual domination which she loves
 To exert upon the face of outward things,
 So moulded, joined, abstracted, so endowed

With interchangeable supremacy,

That men, least sensitive, see, hear, perceive,

And cannot choose but feel. The power, which all

Acknowledge when thus moved, which Nature thus

To bodily sense exhibits, is the express
 Resemblance of that glorious faculty

That higher minds bear with them as their own.

This is the very spirit in which they deal
 With the whole compass of the universe :

They from their native selves can send abroad

Kindred mutations : for themselves create

A like existence ; and, whenever it dawns
 Created for them, catch it, or are caught,

By its inevitable mastery, Like angels stopped upon the way by sound

Of harmony from Heaven's remotest spheres.

Them the enduring and the transient both
 Serve to exalt : they build up greatest things

From least suggestions ; ever on the watch,

Willing to work and to be wrought upon,
 They need not extraordinary calls

To rouse them ; in a world of life they live.

By sensible impressions not enthralled,
 But by their quickening impulse made more prompt

To hold fit converse with the spiritual world,

And with the generations of mankind
 Spread over time, past, present, and to come,

Age after age, till Time shall be no more.
 Such minds are truly from the Deity.

For they are Powers ; and hence the highest bliss

That flesh can know is theirs—the consciousness

Of Whom they are, habitually infused
 Through every image and through every thought,

And all affections by communion raised
 From earth to heaven, from human to divine ;

Hence endless occupation for the Soul,
 Whether discursive or intuitive ;

Hence cheerfulness for acts of daily life,
 Emotions which best foresight need not fear,

Most worthy then of trust when most intense.

Hence, amid ills that vex and wrongs that crush

Our hearts—if here the words of Holy Writ

May with fit reverence be applied—that
 peace
 Which passeth, understanding, that re-
 pose
 In moral judgments which from this
 pure source
 Must come, or will by man be sought in
 vain.

Oh ! who is he that hath his whole life
 long
 Preserved, enlarged, this freedom in him-
 self ?
 For this alone is genuine liberty :
 Where is the favoured being who hath
 held
 That course unchecked, unerring, and
 untired,
 In one perpetual progress smooth and
 bright ?—
 A humbler destiny have we retraced,
 And toll of lapse and hesitating choice,
 And backward wanderings along thorny
 ways :
 Yet—compassed round by mountain
 solitudes,
 Within whose solemn temple I received
 My earliest visitations, careless then
 Of what was given me ; and which now I
 range,
 A meditative, oft a suffering man—
 To I declare—in accents which, from
 truth
 Deriving cheerful confidence, shall blend
 Their modulation with these vocal
 streams—
 That, whatsoever falls my better mind,
 Revolving with the accidents of life,
 May have sustained, that, howsoever mis-
 led,
 Never did I, in quest of right and wrong,
 Tamper with conscience from a private
 aim ;
 Nor was in any public hope the dupe
 Of selfish passions ; nor did ever yield
 Willfully to mean cares or low pursuits,
 But shun with apprehensive jealousy
 From every combination which might aid
 The tendency, too potent in itself,
 Of use and custom to bow down the soul
 Under a growing weight of vulgar sense,
 And substitute a universe of death
 For that which moves with light and life
 informed,
 Actual, divine, and true. To fear and
 love,
 To love as prime and chief, for there fear
 ends,
 Be thus ascribed ; to early intercourse,
 In presence of sublime or beautiful forms,
 With the adverse principles of pain and
 joy—
 Evil as one is rashly named by men

Who know not what they speak. By
 love subsists
 All lasting grandeur, by pervading love ;
 That gone, we are as dust.—Behold the
 fields
 In balmy spring-time full of rising flowers
 And joyous creatures ; see that pair, the
 lamb
 And the lamb's mother, and their tender
 ways
 Shall touch thee to the heart ; thou call-
 est this love,
 And not inaptly so, for love it is,
 Far as it carries thee. In some green
 bower
 Rest, and be not alone, but have thou
 there
 The One who is thy choice of all the
 world :
 There linger, listening, gazing, with de-
 light
 Impassioned, but delight how pitiable !
 Unless this love by a still higher love
 Be hallowed, love that breathes not with-
 out awe ;
 Love that adores, but on the knees of
 prayer,
 By heaven inspired ; that frees from
 chains the soul,
 Lifted, in union with the purest, best,
 Of earth-born passions, on the wings of
 praise
 Bearing a tribute to the Almighty's
 Throne.

This spiritual Love acts not nor can
 exist
 Without Imagination, which, in truth,
 Is but another name for absolute power
 And clearest insight, amplitude of mind,
 And Reason in her most exalted mood.
 This faculty hath been the feeding source
 Of our long labour : we have traced the
 stream
 From the blind cavern whence is faintly
 heard
 Its natal murmur ; followed it to light
 And open day ; accompanied its course
 Among the ways of Nature, for a time
 Lost sight of it bewildered and en-
 gulphed ;
 Then given it greeting as it rose once
 more
 In strength, reflecting from its placid,
 breast
 The works of man and face of human life ;
 And lastly, from its progress have we
 drawn
 Faith in life endless, the sustaining
 thought
 Of human Being, Eternity, and God.

Imagination having been our theme,
 So also hath that intellectual Love,

For they are each in each, and cannot stand

Dividually.—Here must thou be, O Man !
Power to thyself ; no Helper hast thou here ;

Here keepest thou in singleness thy state :
No other can divide with thee this work :
No secondary hand can intervene
To fashion this ability ; 'tis thine,
The prime and vital principle is thine
In the recesses of thy nature, far
From any reach of outward fellowship,
Else is not thine at all. But joy to him,
Oh, joy to him who here hath sown, hath laid

Here, the foundation of his future years :
For all that friendship, all that love can do,

All that a darling countenance can look
Or dear voice utter, to complete the man,
Perfect him, made imperfect in himself,
All shall be his : and he whose soul hath risen

Up to the height of feeling intellect
Shall want no humbler tenderness ; his heart

Be tender as a nursing mother's heart ;
Of female softness shall his life be full,
Of humble cares and delicate desires,
Mild interests and gentlest sympathies.

Child of my parents ! Sister of my soul !
Thanks in sincerest verse have been elsewhere

Poured out for all the early tenderness
Which I from thee imbibed : and 'tis most true

That later seasons owed to thee no less ;
For, spite of thy sweet influence and the touch

Of kindred hands that opened out the springs

Of genial thought in childhood, and in spite

Of all that unassisted I had marked
In life or nature of those charms minute
That win their way into the heart by stealth

(Still to the very going-out of youth)
I too exclusively esteemed *that* love,
And sought *that* beauty, which, as Milton sings,

Hath terror in 't. Thou didst soften down

This over-stereness ; but for thee, dear Friend !

My soul, too reckless of mild grace, had stood

In her original self too confident,
Retained too long a countenance severe ;
A rock with torrents roaring, with the clouds

Familiar, and a favourite of the stars :

But thou didst plant its crevices with flowers,

Hang it with shrubs that twinkle in the breeze, &c.

And teach the little birds to build their nests

And warble in its chambers. At a time
When Nature, destined to remain so long
Foremost in my affections, had fallen back

Into a second place, pleased to become
A handmaid to a nobler than herself,
When every day brought with it some new sense

Of exquisite regard for common things,
And all the earth was budding with these gifts

Of more refined humanity, thy breath,
Dear Sister ! was a kind of gentler spring
That went before my steps. Thereafter came

One whom with thee friendship had early paired ;

She came, no more a phantom to adorn
A moment, but an image of the heart,
And yet a spirit, there for me enshrined
To penetrate the lofty and the low

Even as one essence of pervading light
Shines, in the brightest of ten thousand stars,

And, the meek worm that feeds her lonely lamp

Couched in the dewy grass.

With such a theme,
Coleridge ! with this my argument, of thee

Shall I be silent ? O capacious Soul !
Placed on this earth to love and understand,

And from thy presence shed the light of love,

Shall I be mute, ere thou be spoken of ?
Thy kindred influence to my heart of hearts

Did also find its way. Thus fear relaxed
Her over-weening grasp ; thus thoughts and things

In the self-haunting spirit learned to take
More rational proportions ; mystery,
The incumbent mystery of sense and soul,

Of life and death, time and eternity,
Admitted more habitually a mild
Interposition—a serene delight

In closer gathering cares, such as become

A human creature, howsoever endowed,
Poet, or destined for a humbler name ;
And so the deep enthusiastic joy,
The rapture of the hallelujah sent
From all that breathes and is, was chastened, stemmed

And balanced by pathetic truth, by trust

In hopeful reason, leaning on the stay
Of Providence; and in reverence for
duty,
Here, if need be, struggling with storms,
and there
Strewing in peace life's humblest ground
with herbs,
At every season green, sweet at all hours.

And now, O Friend! this history is
brought

To its appointed close; the discipline
And consummation of a Poet's mind,
In everything that stood most prominent,
Have faithfully been pictured; we have
reached

The time (our guiding object from the
first)

When we may, not presumptuously, I
hope,

Suppose my powers so far confirmed,
and such

My knowledge, as to make me capable
Of building up a Work that shall endure.
Yet much hath been omitted, as need
was;

Of books how much! and even of the
other wealth

That is collected among woods and fields,
Far more: for Nature's secondary grace
Hath hitherto been barely touched upon,
The charm more superficial that attends
Her works, as they present to Fancy's
choice

Apt illustrations of the moral world,
Caught at a glance, or traced with curious
pains.

Finally, and above all, O Friend! (I
speak

With due regret) how much is overlooked
In human nature and her subtle ways,
As studied first in our own hearts, and
then

In life among the passions of mankind,
Varying their composition and their hue,
Where'er we move, under the diverse
shapes

That individual character presents
To an attentive eye. For progress meet,
Along this intricate and difficult path,
Whatever was wanting, something had I
gained,

As one of many schoolfellows compelled,
In hardy independence, to stand up
Amid conflicting interests, and the shock
Of various tempers; to endure and note
What was not understood, though known
to be;

Among the mysteries of love and hate,
Honour and shame, looking to right and
left,

Unchecked by innocence too delicate,

W.F.

And moral notions too intolerant,
Sympathies too contracted. Hence,
when called

To take a station among men, the step
Was easier, the transition more secure,
More profitable also; for, the mind
Learns from such timely exercise to keep
In wholesome separation the two natures,
The one that feels, the other that ob-
serves.

Yet one word more of personal con-
cern:—

Since I withdrew unwillingly from France,
I led an undomestic wanderer's life,
In London chiefly harboured, whence I
roamed,

Tarrying at will in many a pleasant spot
Of rural England's cultivated vales
Or Cambrian solitudes. A youth—(he
bore

The name of Calvert—it shall live, if
words

Of mine can give it life,) in firm belief
That by endowments not from me with-
held

Good might be furthered—in his last de-
By a bequest sufficient for my needs
Enabled me to pause for choice, and
walk

At large and unrestrained, nor damped
too soon

By mortal cares. Himself no Poet, yet
Far less a common follower of the world,
He deemed that my pursuits and labours
lay

Apart from all that leads to wealth, or
even

A necessary maintenance insures,
Without some hazard to the finer sense;
He cleared a passage for me, and the
stream

Flowed in the bent of Nature.

Having now
Told what best merits mention, further
pains

Our present purpose seems not to require,
And I have other tasks. Recall to mind
The mood in which this labour was begun,
O Friend! The termination of my
course

Is nearer now, much nearer; yet even
then,

In that distraction and intense desire,
I said unto the life which I had lived,
Where art thou? Hear I not a voice
from thee

Which 'tis reproach to hear? Anon I
rose

As if on wings, and saw beneath me
stretched

Vast prospect of the world which I had
been

000

And was ; and hence this Song, which
like a lark

I have protracted, in the unwearied
heavens

Singing, and often with more plaintive
voice

To earth attempered and her deep-drawn
sighs,

Yet centring all in love, and in the end
All gratulant, if rightly understood.

Whether to me shall be allotted life,
And, with life, power to accomplish
aught of worth,

That will be deemed no insufficient plea
For having given the story of myself,

Is all uncertain : but, beloved Friend !
When, looking back, thou seest, in clearer

view
Than any liveliest sight of yesterday,

That summer, under whose indulgent
skies,

Upon smooth Quantock's airy ridge we
roved

Unchecked, or loitered 'mid her sylvan
combs,

Thou in bewitching words, with happy
heart

Didst chaunt the vision of that Ancient
Man,

The bright-eyed Mariner, and rueful woes
Didst utter of the Lady Christabel :

And I, associate with such labour, steeped
In soft forgetfulness the livelong hours,

Murmuring of him who, joyous hap, was
found,

After the perils of his moonlight ride,
Near the loud waterfall ; or her who sate

In misery near the miserable Thorn ;
When thou dost to that summer turn thy

thoughts,
And hast before thee all which, then we

were,
To thee, in memory of that happiness,

It will be known, by thee at least, my
Friend !

Felt, that the history of a Poet's mind
Is labour not unworthy of regard :

To thee the work shall justify itself.

The last and later portions of this gift
Have been prepared, not with the buoy-

ant spirits
That were our daily portion when we first
Together wandered in wild Poesy,

But, under pressure of a private grief,
Keen and enduring, which the mind and
heart,

That in this meditative history
Have been laid open, needs must make

me feel
More deeply, yet enable me to bear

More firmly ; and a comfort now hath
risen

From hope that thou art near, and wilt
be soon

Restored to us in renovated health ;
When, after the first mingling of our

tears,
'Mong other consolations, we may draw

Some pleasure from this offering of my
love,

Oh ! yet a few short years of useful life,
And all will be complete, thy race be run,

Thy monument of glory will be raised ;
Then, though (too weak to tread the ways

of truth)
This age fall back to old idolatry,

Though men return to servitude as fast
As the tide ebbs, to ignominy and shame

By nations sink together, we shall still
Find solace—knowing, what we have

learnt to know,
Rich in true happiness if allowed to be

Faithful alike in forwarding a day
Of firmer trust, joint labourers in the

work
(Should Providence such grace to us

vouchsafe)
Of their deliverance, surely yet to come.

Prophets of Nature, we to them will
speak

A lasting inspiration, sanctified
By reason, blest by faith : what we have

loved,
Others will love, and we will teach them

how ;
Instruct them how the mind of man be-

comes
A thousand times more beautiful than

the earth
On which he dwells, above this frame of

things
(Which, mid all revolution in the hopes

And fears of men, doth still remain un-
changed)

In beauty exalted, as it is itself
Of quality and fabric more divine.

THE EXCURSION.

TO

THE RIGHT HONOURABLE WILLIAM, EARL OF LONSDALE, K.G.

ETC. ETC.

Off, through thy fair domains, illustrious Peer !
 In youth I roamed, on youthful pleasures bent ;
 And mused in rocky cell or sylvan tent,
 Beside swift-flowing Lowther's current clear.
 —Now, by thy care befriended, I appear
 Before thee, LONSDALE, and this Work present,
 A token (may it prove a monument !)

Of high respect and gratitude sincere,
 Gladly would I have waited till my task
 Had reached its close ; but Life is insecure,
 And Hope full oft fallacious as a dream ;
 Therefore, for what is here produced, I ask
 Thy favour ; trusting that thou wilt not deem
 The offering, though imperfect, premature.

WILLIAM WORDSWORTH.

RYDAL MOUNT, WESTMORELAND,
 July 29, 1814.

PREFACE TO THE EDITION OF 1814.

THE Title-page announces that this is only a portion of a poem ; and the Reader must be here apprised that it belongs to the second part of a long and laborious Work, which is to consist of three parts. —The Author will candidly acknowledge that, if the first of these had been completed, and in such a manner as to satisfy his own mind, he should have preferred the natural order of publication, and have given that to the world first ; but, as the second division of the Work was designed to refer more to passing events, and to an existing state of things, than the others were meant to do, more continuous exertion was naturally bestowed upon it, and greater progress made here than in the rest of the poem ; and as this part does not depend upon the preceding, to a degree which will materially injure its own peculiar interest, the Author, complying with the earnest entreaties of some valued Friends, presents the following pages to the Public.

It may be proper to state whence the poem, of which *The Excursion* is a part, derives its Title of *THE RECLUSE*. — Several years ago, when the Author retired to his native mountains, with the hope of being enabled to construct a literary Work that might live, it was a reasonable thing that he should take a review of his own mind, and examine how far Nature and Education had qualified him for such employment. As subsidiary to this preparation, he undertook to record, in verse, the origin and progress of his own powers, as far as he was acquainted with them. That Work, addressed to a dear Friend, most distinguished for his knowledge and genius, and to whom the Author's Intellect is deeply indebted, has been long finished ;

and the result of the investigation which gave rise to it was a determination to compose a philosophical poem, containing views of Man, Nature, and Society ; and to be entitled, *The Recluse* ; as having for its principal subject the sensations and opinions of a poet living in retirement. —The preparatory poem is biographical, and conducts the history of the Author's mind to the point when he was emboldened to hope that his faculties were sufficiently matured for entering upon the arduous labour which he had proposed to himself : and the two Works have the same kind of relation to each other, if he may so express himself, as the ante-chapel has to the body of a gothic church. Continuing this allusion, he may be permitted to add, that his minor Pieces, which have been long before the Public, when they shall be properly arranged, will be found by the attentive Reader to have such connection with the main Work as may give them claim to be likened to the little cells, oratories, and sepulchral recesses, ordinarily included in those edifices.

The Author would not have deemed himself justified in saying, upon this occasion, so much of performances either unfinished, or unpublished, if he had not thought that the labour bestowed by him upon what he has heretofore and now laid before the Public, entitled him to candid attention for such a statement as he thinks necessary to throw light upon his endeavours to please and, he would hope, to benefit his countrymen. — Nothing further need be added, than that the first and third parts of *The Recluse* will consist chiefly of meditations in the Author's own person ; and that in the intermediate part (*The Excursion*) the

intervention^{of} of characters speaking is employed, and something of a dramatic form adopted.

It is not the Author's intention formally to announce a system : it was more animating to him to proceed in a different course ; and if he shall succeed in conveying to the mind clear thoughts, lively images, and strong feelings, the Reader will have no difficulty in extracting the system for himself. And in the mean time the following passage, taken from the conclusion of the first book of *The Recluse*, may be acceptable as a kind of *Prospectus* of the design and scope of the whole Poem.

"On Man, on Nature, and on Human Life,
Musing in solitude, I oft perceive
Fair trains of imagery before me rise,
Accompanied by feelings of delight
Pure, or with no unpleasing sadness mixed ;
And I am conscious of affecting thoughts
And dear remembrances, whose presence soothes
Or elevates the Mind, intent to weigh
The good and evil of our mortal state.
—To these emotions, whencesoe'er they come,
Whether from breath of outward circumstance,
Or from the Soul—an impulse to herself—
I would give utterance in numerous verse.
Of Truth, of Graudeur, Beauty, Love, and Hope,
And melancholy Fear subdued by Faith ;
Of blessed consolations in distress ;
Of moral strength, and intellectual Power ;
Of joy in widest commonality spread ;
Of the individual Mind that keeps her own
Inviolate retirement, subject there
To Conscience only, and the law supreme
Of that Intelligence which governs all—
I sing :—fit audience let me find though few !"

So prayed, more gaining than he asked, the Bard—

In holiest mood, Urania, I shall need
Thy guidance, or a greater Muse, if such
Descend to earth or dwell in highest heaven !
For I must tread on shadowy ground, must sink
Deep—and, aloft ascending, breathe in worlds
To which the heaven of heavens is but a veil,
All strength—all terror, single or in bands,
That ever was put forth in personal form—
Jehovah—with his thunder, and the choir
Of shouting Angels, and the empyreal thrones—
I pass them unalarmed. Not Chaos, not
The darkest pit of lowest Erebus,
Nor aught of blinder vacancy, scooped out
By help of dreams—can breed such fear and awe
As fall upon us often when we look
Into our Minds, into the Mind of Man—
My haunt, and the main region of my song.
—Beauty—a living Presence of the earth,
Surpassing the most fair ideal Forms
Which craft of delicate Spirits hath composed
From earth's materials—waits upon my steps ;

Pitches her tents before me as I move,
An hourly neighbour, Paradise, and groves
Elysian, Fortunate Fields—like those of old
Sought in the Atlantic Main—why should they be
A history only of departed things,
Or a mere fiction of what never was ?

For the discerning intellect of Man,
When wedded to this goodly universe
In love and holy passion, shall find these
A simple produce of the common day.

—I, long before the blissful hour arrives,
Would chant, in lonely peace, the spousal verse
Of this great consummation :—and, by words
Which speak of nothing more than what we are,
Would I arouse the sensual from their sleep
Of Death, and win the vacant and the vain
To noble raptures ; while my voice proclaims
How exquisitely the individual Mind
(And the progressive powers perhaps no less
Of the whole species) to the external World
Is fitted :—and how exquisitely, too—

Theme this but little heard of among men—
The external World is fitted to the Mind ;
And the creation (by no lower name
Can it be called) which they with blinded might
Accomplish :—this is our high argument.

—Such grateful haunts foregoing, if I oft
Must turn elsewhere—to travel fear the tribes
And fellowships of men, and see all sights
Of maddening passions mutually inflamed ;
Must hear Humanity in fields and groves
Pipe solitary anguish ; or must hang
Brooding above the fierce confederate storm
Of sorrow, barricaded evermore

Within the walls of cities—may these sounds
Have their authentic comment ; that even these
Hearing, I be not downcast or forlorn !—
Descend, prophetic Spirit ! that inspir'st
The human Soul of universal earth,
Dreaming on things to come ; and dost possess
A metropolitan temple in the hearts
Of mighty Poets : upon me bestow

A gift of genuine insight ; that my Song
With star-like virtue in its place may shine,
Shedding benignant influence, and secure,
Itself, from all malevolent effect
Of those mutations that extend their sway
Throughout the nether sphere !—And if with
this

I mix more lowly matter ; with the thing
Contemplated, describe the Mind and Man
Contemplating ; and who, and what he was—
The transitory Being that beheld
This Vision ; when and where, and how he
lived ;—

Be not this labour useless. If such theme
May sort with highest objects, then—dread
Power !

Whose gracious favour is the primal source
Of all illumination—may my Life
Express the image of a better time,
More wise desires, and simpler manners ;—nurse
My Heart in genuine freedom :—all pure
thoughts

Be with me ;—so shall thy unfailling love
Guide, and support, and cheer me to the end !"

BOOK FIRST

THE WANDERER

ARGUMENT

A summer forenoon.—The Author reaches a ruined Cottage upon a Common, and there meets with a revered Friend, the Wanderer, of whose education and course of life he gives an account.—The Wanderer, while resting under the shade of the Trees that surround the Cottage, relates the History of its last Inhabitant.

'Twas summer, and the sun had mounted high :

Southward the landscape indistinctly glared

Through a pale steam ; but all the northern downs,

In clearest air ascending, showed far off A surface dappled o'er with shadows flung

From brooding clouds ; shadows that lay in spots

Determined and unmoved, with steady beams

Of bright and pleasant sunshine interposed ;

To him most pleasant who on soft cool moss

Extends his careless limbs along the front Of some huge cave, whose rocky ceiling casts

A twilight of its own, an ample shade, Where the wren warbles, while the dreaming man,

Half conscious of the soothing melody, With side-long eye looks out upon the scene,

By power of that impending covert, thrown,

To finer distance. Mine was at that hour Far other lot, yet with good hope that soon

Under a shade as grateful I should find Rest, and be welcomed there to livelier joy.

Across a bare wide Common I was toiling With languid steps that by the slippery turf

Were baffled ; nor could my weak arm disperse

The host of insects gathering round my face :

And ever with me as I paced along.

Upon that open moorland stood a grove,

The wished-for port to which my course was bound.

Thither I came, and there, amid the gloom

Spread by a brotherhood of lofty elms, Appeared a roofless Hut ; four naked walls

That stared upon each other !—I looked round,

And to my wish and to my hope espied The Friend I sought ; a Man of reverend age,

But stout and hale, for travel unimpaired. There was he seen upon the cottage-bench,

Reclumbent in the shade, as if asleep ; An iron-pointed staff lay at his side.

Him had I marked the day before—alone

And stationed in the public way, with face

Turned toward the sun then setting, while that staff

Afforded, to the figure of the man Detained for contemplation or repose,

Graceful support ; his countenance as he stood

Was hidden from my view, and he remained

Unrecognised ; but, stricken by the sight,

With slackened footsteps I advanced, and soon

A glad congratulation we exchanged At such unthought-of meeting.—For the night

We parted, none willingly ; and now He by appointment waited for me here,

Under the covert of these clustering elms.

We were tried Friends : amid a pleasant vale,

In the antique market-village where was passed

My school-time, an apartment he had owned,

To which at intervals the Wanderer drew, And found a kind of home or harbour there.

He loved me ; from a swarm of rosy boys Singled out me, as he in sport would say,

For my grave looks, too thoughtful for my years.

As I grew up, it was my best delight To be his chosen comrade. Many a time,

On holidays, we rambled through the woods :

We sate—we walked ; he pleased me with report

Of things which he had seen ; and often touched

Abstrusest matter, reasonings of the
mind

Turned inward ; or at my request would
sing

Old songs, the product of his native hills ;
A skilful distribution of sweet sounds,
Feeding the soul, and eagerly imbibed
As cool refreshing water, by the cafe
Of the industrious husbandman, diffused
Through a parched meadow-ground, in
time of drought.

Still deeper welcome found his pure dis-
course :

How precious when in riper days I
learned

To weigh with care his words, and to re-
joice

In the plain presence of his dignity !

Oh ! many are the Poets that are sown
By Nature ; men endowed with highest
gifts,

The vision and the faculty divine ;
Yet wanting the accomplishment of verse,
(Which, in the docile season of their
youth,

It was denied them to acquire, through
lack

Of culture and the inspiring aid of books,
Or haply by a temper too severe,
Or a nice backwardness afraid of shame)
Nor having e'er, as life advanced, been
led

By circumstance to take unto the height
The measure of themselves, these fav-
oured Beings,

All but a scattered few, live out their
time,

Husbanding that which they possess
within,

And go to the grave, unthought of.
Strongest minds

Are often those of whom the noisy world
Hears least ; else surely this Man had not
left

His graces unrevealed and unproclaimed.
But, as the mind was filled with inward
light,

So not without distinction had he lived,
Beloved and honoured—far as he was
known.

And some small portion of his eloquent
speech,

And something that may serve to set in
view

The feeling pleasures of his loneliness,
His observations, and the thoughts his
mind

Had dealt with—I will here record in
verse ;

Which, if with truth it correspond, and
sink

Or rise as venerable Nature leads,

The high and tender Muses shall accept
With gracious smile, deliberately pleased,
And listening Time reward with sacred
praise.

Among the hills of Athol he was born ;
Where, on a small hereditary farm,
An unproductive slip of rugged ground,
His Parents, with their numerous off-
spring, dwelt ;

A virtuous household, though exceeding
poor !

Pure livers were they all, austere and
grave,

And fearing God ; the very children
taught

Stern self-respect, a reverence for God's
word,

And an habitual piety, maintained
With strictness scarcely known on Eng-
lish ground.

From his sixth year, the Boy of whom
I speak,

In summer, tended cattle on the hills ;
But, through the inclement and the peril-
ous days

Of long-continuing winter, he repaired,
Equipped with satchel, to a school, that
stood

Sole building on a mountain's dreary
edge,

Remote from view of city spire, or sound
Of minster clock ! From that bleak
tenement

He, many an evening, to his distant home
In solitude returning, saw the hills

Grow larger in the darkness ; all alone
Beheld the stars come out above his head,

And travelled through the wood, with no
one near

To whom he might confess the things he
saw.

So the foundations of his mind were
laid.

In such communion, not from terror free,
While yet a child, and long before his
time,

Had he perceived the presence and the
power

Of greatness ; and deep feelings had im-
pressed

So vividly great objects that they lay
Upon his mind like substances, whose

presence
Perplexed the bodily sense. He had re-
ceived

A precious gift ; for, as he grew in years,
With these impressions would he still

compare
All his remembrances, thoughts, shapes,
and forms ;

And, being still unsatisfied with aught
Of dimmer character, he thence attained
An active power to fasten images
Upon his brain; and on their pictured
lines

Intensely brooded, even till they acquired

The liveliness of dreams. Nor did he fail,
While yet a child, with a child's eagerness
Incessantly to turn his ear and eye
On all things which the moving seasons
brought

To feed such appetite—nor this alone
Appeased his yearning:—in the after-
day

Of boyhood, many an hour in caves for-
lorn.

And mid the hollow depths of naked
crag

He sat, and even in their fixed linea-
ments,

Or from the power of a peculiar eye,
Or by creative feeling overborne,
Or by predominance of thought oppressed,
Even in their fixed and steady lineaments
He traced an ebbing and a flowing mind,
Expression ever varying!

Thus informed,
He had small need of books: for many a
tale

Traditionary, round the mountains hung,
And many a legend, peopling the dark
woods,

Nourished Imagination in her growth,
And gave the Mind that apprehensive
power

By which she is made quick to recognise
The moral properties and scope of things.
But eagerly he read, and read again,
Whate'er the minister's old shelf supplied;
The life and death of martyrs, who sus-
tained,

With will inflexible, those fearful pangs
Triumphantly displayed in records left
Of persecution, and the Covenant—times
Whose echo rings through Scotland to
this hour!

And there, by lucky hap, had been pre-
served

A straggling volume, torn and incomplete,
That left half-told the preternatural tale,
Romance of giants, chronicle of fiends,
Profuse in garniture of wooden cuts
Strange and uncouth; dire faces, figures
dire,

Sharp-kneed, sharp-elbowed, and lean-
ankled too,

With long and ghostly shanks—forms
which once seen

Could never be forgotten!

In his heart,
Where Fear sat thus, a cherished visitant,
Was wanting yet the pure delight of love

By sound diffused, or by the breathing
air,

Or by the silent looks of happy things,
Or flowing from the universal face
Of earth and sky. But he had felt the
power

Of Nature, and already was prepared,
By his intense conceptions, to receive
Deeply the lesson deep of love which he,
Whom Nature, by whatever means, has
taught

To feel intensely, cannot but receive.

Such was the Boy—but for the grow-
ing Youth

What soul was his, when, from the naked
top

Of some bold headland, he beheld the sun
Rise up, and bathe the world in light!

He looked—

Ocean and earth, the solid frame of earth
And ocean's liquid mass, in gladness lay
Beneath him:—Far and wide the clouds
were touched,

And in their silent faces could he read
Unutterable love. Sound needed none,
Nor any voice of joy; his spirit drank

The spectacle: sensation, soul, and form,
All melted into him; they swallowed up
His animal being; in them did he live,
And by them did he live; they were his
life.

In such access of mind, in such high hour
Of visitation from the living God,
Thought was not; in enjoyment it ex-
pired.

No thanks he breathed, he proffered no
request;

Rapt into still communion that tran-
scends

The imperfect offices of prayer and
praise,

His mind was a thanksgiving to the
power

That made him; it was blessedness and
love!

A Herdsman on the lonely mountain
tops,

Such intercourse was his, and in this sort
Was his existence oftentimes possessed.
O then how beautiful, how bright, ap-
peared

The written promise! Early had he
learned

To reverence the volume that displays
The mystery, the life which cannot die;

But in the mountains did he feel his faith.
All things, responsive to the writing,
there

Breathed immortality, revolving life,
And greatness still revolving; infinite:

There littleness was not: the least of
things

Seemed infinite; and there his spirit
shaped

Her prospects, nor did he believe,—he
saw.

What wonder if his being thus became
Sublime and comprehensive! Low de-
sires,

Low thoughts had there no place; yet
was his heart

Lowly; for he was meek in gratitude.

Oft as he called those ecstasies to mind,
And whence they flowed, and from thence
he acquired

Wisdom, which works thro' patience;
thence he learned

In oft-recurring hours of sober thought
To look on Nature with a humble heart,
Self-questioned where it did not under-
stand,

And with a superstitious eye of love.

So passed the time; yet to the nearest
town

He duly went with what small overplus
His earnings might supply, and brought
away

The book that most had tempted his
desires

While at the stall he read. Among the
hills

He gazed upon that mighty orb of song,
The divine Milton. Lore of different
kind,

The annual savings of a toilsome life,
His School-master supplied; books that
explain

The purer elements of truth involved
In lines and numbers, and, by charm
severe,

(Especially perceived where nature
droops

And feeling is suppressed) preserve the
mind

Busy in solitude and poverty.

These occupations oftentimes deceived
The listless hours, while in the hollow
vale,

Hollow and green, he lay on the green
turf

In pensive idleness. What could he do,
Thus daily thirsting, in that lonesome
life,

With blind endeavours? Yet, still up-
permost,

Nature was at his heart as if he felt,
Though yet he knew not how, a wasting
power

In all things that from her sweet influence
Might tend to wean him. Therefore with
her hues,

Her forms, and with the spirit of her
forms,

He clothed the nakedness of austere truth.

While yet he lingered in the rudiments
Of science, and among her simplest laws,
His triangles—they were the stars of
heaven.

The silent stars! Oft did he take delight
To measure the altitude of some tall crag
That is the eagle's birth-place, or some
peak

Familiar with forgotten years, that shows
Inscribed upon its visionary sides.

The history of many a winter storm,
Or obscure records of the path of fire.

And thus before his eighteenth year
was told,

Accumulated feelings pressed his heart
With still increasing weight; he was over-
powered

By Nature; by the turbulence subdued
Of his own mind; by mystery and hope,
And the first virgin passion of a soul.

Communing with the glorious universe.
Full often wished he that the winds might
rage

When they were silent: far more fondly
now

Than in his earlier season did he love
The pestuous nights—the conflict and the
sounds

That live in darkness. From his intellect
And from the stillness of abstracted
thought

He asked repose; and, failing oft to win
The peace required, he scanned the laws
of light

Amid the roar of torrents, where they send
From hollow clefts up to the clearer air
A cloud of mist, that smitten by the sun
Varies its rainbow hues. But vainly
thus,

And vainly by all other means, he strove
To mitigate the fever of his heart.

In dreams, in study, and in ardent
thought,

Thus was he reared; much wanting to
assist

The growth of intellect, yet gaining more,
And every moral feeling of his soul
Strengthened and braced, by breathing
in content

The keen, the wholesome, air of poverty,
And drinking from the well of homely
life.

—But, from past liberty, and tried re-
straints,

He now was summoned to select the
course

Of humble industry that promised best
To yield him no unworthy maintenance.

Urged by his Mother, he essayed to teach
A village-school—but wandering thoughts
were then

A misery to him ; and the Youth resigned
A task he was unable to perform.

That stern yet kindly Spirit, who constrains
The Savoyard to quit his naked rocks,
The free-born Swiss to leave his narrow
vales,

Spirit attached to regions mountainous
Like their own steadfast clouds) did now
impel

His restless mind to look abroad with
hope.

—An irksome drudgery seems it to plod
on,

Through hot and dusty ways, or pelting
storm,

A vagrant Merchant under a heavy load
Bent as he moves, and needing frequent
rest ;

Yet do such travellers find their own
delight ;

And their hard service, deemed debasing
now,

Gained merited respect in simpler times ;
When squire, and priest, and they who
round them dwelt

In rustic sequestration—all dependent
Upon the PEDLAR's toil—supplied their
wants,

Or pleased their fancies, with the wares
he brought.

Not ignorant was the Youth that still
no few

Of his adventurous countrymen were led
By perseverance in this track of life

To competence and ease :—to him it
offered

Attractions manifold ;—and this he chose.
—His Parents on the enterprise bestowed

Their farewell benediction, but with
hearts

Foreboding evil. From his native hills
He wandered far ; much did he see of
men,

Their manners, their enjoyments, and
pursuits,

Their passions and their feelings ; chiefly
those

Essential and eternal in the heart,
That, 'mid the simpler forms of rural life,

Exist more simple in their elements,
And speak a plainer language. In the
woods,

A lone Enthusiast, and among the fields,
Itinerant in this labour, he had passed

The better portion of his time ; and there
Spontaneously had his affections thriven

Amid the bounties of the year, the peace
And liberty of nature ; there he kept

In solitude and solitary thought
His mind in a just equipoise of love.

Serene it was, unclouded by the cares
Of ordinary life ; unvexed, unwarped
By partial bondage. In his steady
course,

No piteous revolutions had he felt,
No wild varieties of joy and grief.

Unoccupied by sorrow of its own,
His heart lay open ; and, by nature
tuned

And constant disposition of his thoughts
To sympathy with man, he was alive

To all that was enjoyed where'er he went,
And all that was endured ; for, in him-
self

Happy, and quiet in his cheerfulness,
He had no painful pressure from without

That made him turn aside from wretched-
ness

With coward fears. He could afford to
suffer

With those whom he saw suffer. Hence
it came

That in our best experience he was rich,
And in the wisdom of our daily life.

For hence, minutely, in his various
rounds,

He had observed the progress and decay
Of many minds, of minds and bodies too ;

The history of many families ;
How they had prospered ; how they were
o'erthrown

By passion or mischance, or such misrule
Among the unthinking masters of the
earth

As makes the nations groan.

This active course
He followed till provision for his wants

Had been obtained ;—the Wanderer then
resolved

To pass the remnant of his days, untasked
With needless services, from hardship
free.

His calling laid aside, he lived at ease ;
But still he loved to pace the public roads

And the wild paths ; and, by the summer's
warmth

Invited, often would he leave his home
And journey far, revisiting the scenes

That to his memory were most endeared.
—Vigorous in health, of hopeful spirits,
undamped

By worldly-mindedness or anxious care ;
Observant, studious, thoughtful, and
refreshed

By knowledge gathered up from day to
day ;

Thus had he lived a long and innocent
life.

The Scottish Church, both on himself
and those

With whom from childhood he grew up,
had held

The strong hand of her purity ; and
still
Had watched him with an unrelenting
eye.

This he remembered in his riper age
With gratitude, and reverential thoughts.
But by the native vigour of his mind,
By his habitual wanderings out of doors,
By loneliness, and goodness, and kind
works,

Whate'er, in docile childhood or in youth,
He had imbibed of fear or darker thought
Was melted all away ; so true was this,
That sometimes his religion seemed to
me

Self-taught, as of a dreamer in the woods ;
Who to the model of his own pure heart
Shaped his belief, as grace divine in-
spired,

And human reason dictated with awe.
—And surely never did there live on
earth

A man of kindlier nature. The rough
sports

And teasing ways of children vexed not
him ;

Indulgent listener was he to the tongue
Of garrulous age ; nor did the sick man's
tale,

To his fraternal sympathy addressed,
Obtain reluctant hearing.

Plain his garb ;
Such as might suit a rustic Sire, pre-
pared

For sabbath duties ; yet he was a man
Whom no one could have passed without
remark.

Active and nervous was his gait ; his
limbs

And his whole figure breathed intelligence.
Time had compressed the freshness of
his cheek

Into a narrower circle of deep red,
But had not tamed his eye ; that, under
brows

Shaggy and grey, had meanings which
it brought

From years of youth ; which, like a Being
made

Of many Beings, he had wondrous skill
To blend with knowledge of the years to
come,

Human, or such as lie beyond the grave.

So was He framed ; and such his course
of life

Who now, with no appendage but a staff,
The prized memorial of relinquished
toils,

Upon that cottage-bench reposed his
limbs,

Screened from the sun. Supine the
Wanderer lay,

His eyes as if in drowsiness half shut,
The shadows of the breezy elms above
Dappling his face. He had not heard the
sund

Of my appotching steps, and in the
shade

Unnoticed did I stand some minutes'
space.

At length I hailed him, seeing that his
hat

Was moist with water-drops, as if the
brim

Had newly scooped a running stream.
He rose,

And ere our lively greeting into peace
Had settled, " 'Tis," said I, " a burning
day :

My lips are parched with thirst, but you,
it seems,

Have somewhere found relief." " He,
at the word.

Pointing towards a sweet-briar, bade me
climb

The fence where that aspiring shrub
looked out

Upon the public way. It was a plot
Of garden ground run wild, its matted
weeds

Marked with the steps of those whom,
as they passed,

The gooseberry trees that shot in long
lank slips,

Or currants, hanging from their leafless
stems,

In scanty strings, had tempted to o'er-
leap

The broken wall. I looked around, and
there,

Where two tall hedge-rows of thick alder
boughs

Joined in a cold damp nook, espied a well
Shrouded with willow-flowers and plummy
fern.

My thirst I slaked, and, from the cheer-
less spot

Withdrawing, straightway to the shade
returned

Where sate the old Man on the cottage-
bench ;

And, while, beside him, with uncovered
head,

I yet was standing, freely to respire,
And cool my temples in the fanning air,

Thus did he speak. " I see around me
here

Things which you cannot see : we die,
my Friend,

Nor we alone, but that which each man
loved

And prized in his peculiar nook of earth
Dies with him, or is changed ; and very
soon

Even of the good is no memorial left.

—The Poets, in their elegies and songs
Lamenting the departed, call the groves,
They call upon the hills and streams to
mourn,
And senseless rocks ; nor idly ; for they
speak,
In these their invocations, with a voice
Obedient to the strong creative power
Of human passion. Sympathies there are
More tranquil, yet perhaps of kindred
birth,
That steal upon the meditative mind,
And grow with thought. Beside yon
spring I stood,
And eyed its waters till we seemed to feel
One sadness, they and I. For them a
bond
Of brotherhood is broken : time has
been,
When, every day, the touch of human
hand
Dislodged the natural sleep that binds
them up
In mortal stillness ; and they ministered
To human comfort. Stooping down to
drink,
Upon the slimy, foot-stone I espied
The useless fragment of a wooden bowl,
Green with the moss of years, and subject
only
To the soft handling of the elements :
There let it lie—how foolish are such
thoughts !
Forgive them ;—never—never did my
steps
Approach this door but she who dwelt
within
A daughter's welcome gave me, and I
loved her
As my own child. Oh, Sir ! the good die
first,
And they whose hearts are dry as summer
dust
Burn to the socket. Many a passenger
Hath blessed poor Margaret for her
gentle looks,
When she upheld the cool refreshment
drawn
From that forsaken spring ; and no one
came
But he was welcome ; no one went away
But that it seemed she loved him. She is
dead,
The light extinguished of her lonely hut,
The hut itself abandoned to decay,
And she forgotten in the quiet grave.

I speak," continued he, " of One whose
stock
Of virtues bloomed beneath this lowly
roof.
She was a Woman of a steady mind,
Tender and deep in her excess of love ;

Not speaking much, pleased rather with
the joy
Of her own thoughts : by some especial
care
Her temper had been framed, as if to
make
A Being, who by adding love to peace
Might live on earth a life of happiness.
Her wedded Partner lacked not on his
side
The humble worth that satisfied her
heart :
Frugal, affectionate, sober, and withal
Keenly industrious. She with pride
would tell
That he was often seated at his loom.
In summer, ere the mower was abroad
Among the dewy grass—in early spring,
Ere the last star had vanished.—They
who passed
At evening, from behind the garden fence
Might hear his busy spade, which he
would ply.
After his daily work, until the light
Had failed, and every leaf and flower
were lost
In the dark hedges. So their days were
spent
In peace and comfort ; and a pretty boy
Was their best hope, next to the God in
heaven.

Not twenty years ago, but you I think
Can scarcely bear it now in mind, there
came
Two blighting seasons, when the fields
were left
With half a harvest. It pleased Heaven
to add
A worse affliction in the plague of war :
This happy Land was stricken to the
heart !
A Wanderer then among the cottages,
I, with my freight of winter raiment, saw
The hardships of that season : many rich
Sank down, as in a dream, among the
poor :
And of the poor did many cease to be,
And their place knew them not. Mean-
while, abridged
Of daily comforts, gladly reconciled
To numerous self-denials, Margaret
Went struggling on through those calam-
itous years
With cheerful hope, until the second
autumn,
When her life's Helpmate on a sick-bed
lay,
Smitten with perilous fever. In disease
He lingered long ; and, when his strength
returned,
He found the little he had stored, to meet
The hour of accident or crippling age,

Was all consumed. A second infant now
 Was added to the troubles of a time
 Laden, for them and all of their degree,
 With care and sorrow : shoals of artisans
 From ill-requited labour turned adrift
 Sought daily bread from public charity,
 They, and their wives and children—
 happier far
 Could they have lived as do the little
 birds
 That peck along the hedge-rows, or the
 kite
 That makes her dwelling on the moun-
 tain rocks !

A sad reverse it was for him who long
 Had filled with plenty, and possessed in
 peace,
 This lonely Cottage. At the door he
 stood,
 And whistled many a snatch of merry
 tunes
 That had no mirth in them ; or with his
 knife
 Carved uncouth figures on the heads of
 sticks—
 Then, not less idly, sought, through
 every nook
 In house or garden, any casual work
 Of use or ornament ; and with a strange,
 Amusing, yet uneasy, novelty,
 He mingled, where he might, the various
 tasks
 Of summer, autumn, winter, and of
 spring.
 But this endured not ; his good humour
 soon
 Became a weight in which no pleasure
 was :
 And poverty brought on a petted mood
 And a sore temper : day by day he
 drooped,
 And he would leave his work—and to the
 town
 Would turn without an errand his slack
 steps ;
 Or wander here and there among the
 fields.
 One while he would speak lightly of his
 babes,
 And with a cruel tongue : at other times
 He tossed them with a false unnatural
 joy :
 And 'twas a rueful thing to see the looks
 Of the poor innocent children. ' Every
 smile,'
 Said Margaret to me, here beneath these
 trees,
 ' Made my heart bleed.' "

At this the Wanderer paused ;
 And, looking up to those enormous elms,
 He said, " 'Tis now the hour of deepest
 noon.

At this still season of repose and peace,
 This hour when all things which are not
 at rest

Are cheerful ; while this multitude of flies
 With tuneful hum is filling all the air ;
 Why should a tear be on an old Man's
 cheek ?

Why should we thus, with an untoward
 mind,
 And in the weakness of humanity,
 From natural wisdom turn our hearts
 away ;

To natural comfort shut our eyes and
 ears :

And, feeding on disquiet, thus disturb
 The calm of nature with our restless
 thoughts ? "

He spake with somewhat of a solemn
 tone :

But, when he ended, there was in his
 face

Such easy cheerfulness, a look so mild,
 That for a little time it stole away
 All recollection ; and that simple tale
 Passed from my mind like a forgotten
 sound.

A while on trivial things we held dis-
 course,

To me soon tasteless. In my own des-
 pite,

I thought of that poor Woman as of one
 Whom I had known and loved. He had
 rehearsed

Her homely tale with such familiar
 power,

With such an active countenance, an eye
 So busy, that the things of which he
 spake

Seemed present ; and, attention now
 relaxed,

A heart-felt chillness crept along my
 veins.

I rose ; and, having left the breezy shade,
 Stood drinking comfort from the warmer
 sun,

That had not cheered me long—ere,
 looking round

Upon that tranquil Ruin, I returned,
 And begged of the old Man that, for my
 sake,

He would resume his story.

He replied,
 " It were a wantonness, and would
 demand

Severe reproof, if we were men whose
 hearts

Could hold vain dalliance with the misery
 Even of the dead ; contented thence to
 draw

A momentary pleasure, never marked
 By reason, barren of all future good.

But we have known that there is often
 found
 In mournful thoughts, and always might
 be found,
 A power to virtue friendly ; wer't not so,
 I am a dreamer among men, indeed
 An idle dreamer ! 'Tis a common tale.
 An ordinary sorrow of man's life,
 A tale of silent suffering, hardly clothed
 In bodily form.—But without further
 bidding
 I will proceed.

While thus it fared with them,
 To whom this cottage, till those hapless
 years,
 Had been a blessed home, it was my
 chance
 To travel in a country far remote :
 And when these lofty elms once more
 appeared,
 What pleasant expectations lured me on
 O'er the flat Common !—With quick
 step I reached
 The threshold, lifted with light hand the
 latch ;
 But, when I entered, Margaret looked at
 me
 A little while ; then turned her head
 away
 Speechless,—and, sitting down upon a
 chair,
 Wept bitterly. I wist not what to do,
 Nor how to speak to her. Poor Wretch !
 at last
 She rose from off her seat, and then,—O
 Sir !
 I cannot tell how she pronounced my
 name :—
 With fervent love, and with a face of grief
 Unutterably helpless, and a look
 That seemed to cling upon me, she en-
 quired
 If I had seen her husband. As she spake
 A strange surprise and fear came to my
 heart,
 Nor had I power to answer ere she told
 That he had disappeared—not two
 months gone.
 He left his house : two wretched days
 had past,
 And on the third, as wistfully she raised
 Her head from off her pillow, to look
 forth,
 'Like one in trouble, for returning light,
 Within her chamber-casement she espied
 A folded paper, lying as if placed
 To meet her waking eyes.' This trem-
 blingly
 She opened—found no writing, but
 beheld
 Pieces of money carefully enclosed,
 Silver and gold. 'I shuddered at the
 sight,'

Said Margaret, 'for I knew it was his
 hand
 That must have placed it there ; and ere
 that day
 Was ended, that long anxious day, I
 learned,
 From one who by my husband had been
 sent
 With the sad news, that he had joined a
 troop
 Of soldiers, going to a distant land.
 —He left me thus—he could not gather
 heart
 To take a farewell of me : for he feared
 That I should follow with my babes, and
 sink
 Beneath the misery of that wandering
 life.'

This tale did Margaret tell with many
 tears:
 And, when she ended, I had little power
 To give her comfort, and was glad to take,
 Such words of hope from her own mouth
 as served
 To cheer us both. But long we had not
 talked
 Ere we built up a pile of better thoughts,
 And with a brighter eye she looked
 around
 As if she had been shedding tears of joy.
 We parted.—'Twas the time of early
 spring ;
 I left her busy with her garden tools ;
 And well remember, o'er that fence she
 looked,
 And, while I paced along the foot-way
 path,
 Called out, and sent a blessing after me,
 With tender cheerfulness, and with a
 voice
 That seemed the very sound of happy
 thoughts.

I roved o'er many a hill and many a
 dale,
 With my accustomed load ; in heat and
 cold,
 Through many a wood and many an
 open ground,
 In sunshine and in shade, in wet and fair,
 Drooping or blithe of heart, as might
 befall ;
 My best companions now the driving
 winds,
 And now the ' trotting brooks ' and whis-
 pering trees,
 And now the music of my own sad steps,
 With many a short-lived thought that
 passed between,
 And disappeared.

I journeyed back this way,
 When, in the warmth of midsummer, the
 wheat

Was yellow; and the soft and bladed
grass, ~~the~~
Springing afresh, had o'er the hay-field
spread

Its tender verdure. At the door arrived,
I found that she was absent. In the
shade,

Where now we sit, I waited her return.
Her cottage, then a cheerful object, wore
Its customary look,—only, it seemed,
The honeysuckle, crowding round the
porch,

Hung down in heavier tufts; and that
bright weed,

The yellow stone-crop, suffered to take
root

Along the window's edge, profusely grew
Blinding the lower panes. I turned aside,
And strolled into her garden. It ap-
peared

To lag behind the season, and had lost
Its pride of neatness. Daisy-flowers
and thrift

Had broken their trim border-lines, and
straggled

O'er paths they used to deck: carnations,
once

Prized for surpassing beauty, and no
less

For the peculiar pains they had required,
Declined their languid heads, wanting
support.

The cumbrous bind-weed, with its
wreaths and bells,

Had twined about her two small rows of
peas,

And dragged them to the earth.

Ere this an hour
Was wasted.—Back I turned my restless
steps;

A stranger passed; and, guessing whom
I sought,

He said that she was used to ramble far.—
The sun was sinking in the west; and
now

I sate with sad impatience. From within
Her solitary infant cried aloud:

Then, like a blast that dies away self-
stilled,

The voice was silent. From the bench I
rose;

But neither could divert nor soothe my
thoughts.

The spot, though fair, was very desolate—
The longer I remained, more desolate:

And, looking round me, now I first
observed

The corner stones, on either side the
porch,

With dull red stains discoloured, and
stuck o'er

With tufts and hairs of wool, as if the
sheep,

That fed upon the Common, thither came
Familiarly, and found a couching-place
Even at her threshold. Deeper shadows
fell

From these tall elms: the cottage-clock
struck eight;—

I turned, and saw her distant a few
steps.

Her face was pale and thin—her figure,
too,

Was changed. As she unlocked the door,
she said,

'It grieves me, you have waited here so
long.

But, in good truth, I've wandered much
of late;

And, sometimes—to my shame I speak
—have need

Of my best prayers to bring me back
again.'

While on the board she spread our even-
ing meal,

She told me—interrupting not the work
Which gave employment to her listless
hands—

That she had parted with her elder child;
To a kind master on a distant farm

Now happily apprenticed.—'I perceive
You look at me, and you have cause; to-
day

I have been travelling far; and many
days

About the fields I wander, knowing this
Only, that what I seek I cannot find;

And so I waste my time: for I am
changed;

And to myself,' said she, 'have done
much wrong

And to this helpless infant. I have slept
Weeping, and weeping have I waked;
my tears

Have flowed as if my body were not such
As others are; and I could never die.

But I am now in mind and in my heart
More easy; and I hope,' said she, 'that
God

Will give me patience to endure the things
Which I behold at home.'

It would have grieved
Your very soul to see her. Sir, I feel

The story linger in my heart; I fear
'Tis long and tedious; but my spirit
clings

To that poor Woman:—so familiarly
Do I perceive her manner, and her look,

And presence; and so deeply do I feel
Her goodness, that, not seldom, in my
walks

A momentary trance comes over me;
And to myself I seem to muse on One

By sorrow laid asleep; or borne away,
A human being destined to awake

To human life, or something very near

To human life, when he shall come again
For whom she suffered. Yes, it would
have grieved

Your very soul to see her : evermore
Her eyelids drooped, her eyes downward
were cast ;

And, when she at her table gave me food,
She did not look at me. Her voice was
low,

Her body was subdued. In every act,
Pertaining to her house-affairs, appeared
The careless stillness of a thinking mind
Self-occupied, to which all outward
things

Are like an idle matter. Still she sighed,
But yet no motion of the breast was
seen,

No heaving of the heart. While by the
fire

We sate together, sighs came on my ear,
I knew not how, and hardly whence they
came.

Ere my departure, to her care I gave,
For her son's use, some tokens of regard,
Which with a look of welcome she re-
ceived ;

And exhorted her to place her trust
In God's good love, and seek his help by
prayer.

I took my staff and, when I kissed her
babe,

The tears stood in her eyes. I left her
then

With the best hope and comfort I could
give :

She thanked me for my wish ;—but for
my hope

It seemed she did not thank me.

I returned,
And too my rounds along this road
again

When on its sunny bank the primrose
flower

Peeped forth, to give an earnest of the
Spring.

I found her sad and drooping : she had
learned

No tidings of her husband ; if he lived,
She knew not that he lived ; if he were
dead,

She knew not he was dead. She seemed
the same

In person and appearance ; but here
house

Bespoke a sleepy hand of negligence ;
The floor was neither dry nor neat, the
hearth

Was comfortless, and her small lot of
books,

Which, in the cottage-window, heretofore
Had been piled up against the corner
panes

In seemly order, now, with straggling
leaves

Lay scattered here and there, open or
shut,

As they had chanced to fall. Her infant
babe

Had from its Mother caught the trick of
grief,

And sighed among its playthings. I
withdrew,

And once again entering the garden saw,
More plainly still, that poverty and grief
Were now come nearer to her : weeds
defaced

The hardened soil, and knots of withered
grass :

No ridges there appeared of clear black
mold,

No winter greenness ; of her herbs and
flowers,

It seemed the better part were gnawed
away

Or trampled into earth ; a chain of
straw,

Which had been twined about the slender
stem

Of a young apple-tree, lay at its root ;
The bark was nibbled round by truant
sheep.

—Margaret stood near, her infant in her
arms,

And, noting that my eye was on the tree,
She said, ' I fear it will be dead and gone

Ere Robert come again.' When to the
House

We had returned together, she enquired.
If I had any hope :—but for her babe

And for her little orphan boy, she said,
She had no wish to live, that she must die

Of sorrow. Yet I saw the idle loom
Still in its place ; his sunday garments

hung
Upon the self-same nail ; his very staff

Stood undisturbed behind the door.

And when,
In bleak December, I retraced this way,

She told me that her little babe was dead,
And she was left alone. She now,

released
From her maternal cares, had taken up

The employment common through these
wilds, and gained

By spinning hemp, a pittance for herself ;
And for this end had hired a neighbour's
boy

To give her needful help. That very
time

Most willingly she put her work aside,
And walked with me along the miry road,

Heedless how far ; and, in such piteous
sort

That any heart had ached to hear her,
begged

That, wheresoe'er I went, I still would ask
For him whom she had lost. We parted
then—

Our final parting; for from that time
forth

Did many seasons pass ere I returned
Into this tract again.

Nine tedious years;
From their first separation, nine long
years,

She lingered in unquiet widowhood;
A Wife and Widow. Needs must it have
been

A sore heart-wasting! I have heard,
my Friend,

That in yon arbour oftentimes she sate
Alone, through half the vacant sabbath
day;

And, if a dog passed by, she still would
quit

The shade, and look abroad. On this old
bench

For hours she sate; and evermore her eye
Was busy in the distance, shaping things
That made her heart beat quick. You
see that path,

Now faint,—the grass has crept o'er its
grey line;

There, to and fro, she paced through
many a day

Of the warm summer, from a belt of hemp
That girt her waist, spinning the long-
drawn thread

With backward steps. Yet ever as there
passed

A man whose garments showed the sol-
dier's red,

Or crippled mendicant in sailor's garb,
The little child who sate to turn the wheel
Ceased from his task; and she with fal-
tering voice

Made many a fond enquiry; and when
they,

Whose presence gave no comfort, were
gone by,

Her heart was still more sad. And by
yon gate,

That bars the traveller's road, she often
stood,

And when a stranger horseman came,
the latch

Would lift, and in his face look wist-
fully:

Most happy, if, from aught discovered
there

Of tender feeling, she might dare repeat
The same sad question. Meanwhile her
poor Hut,

Sank to decay; for he was gone, whose
hand,

At the first nipping of October frost,
Closed up each chink, and with fresh
bands of straw

Chequered the green-grown thatch. And
so she lived

Through the long winter; reckless and
alone;

Until her house by frost, and thaw, and
rain,

Was sapped; and while she slept, the
nightly ramps

Did chill her breast; and in the stormy
day

Her tattered clothes were ruffled by the
wind,

Even at the side of her own fire. Yet still
She loved this wretched spot, nor would
for worlds

Have parted hence; and still that length
of road,

And this wide bench, of torturing hope
endeared,

Fast rooted at her heart: and here, my
Friend,—

In sickness, she remained; and here she
died;

Last human tenant of those ruined
walls!"

The old Man ceased: he saw that I
was moved;

From that low bench, rising instinctively
I turned aside in weakness, nor had

power

To thank him for the tale which he had
told.

I stood, and leaning o'er the garden wall
Reviewed that Woman's sufferings; and
it seemed

To comfort me while with a brother's
love

I blessed her in the impotence of grief.
Then towards the cottage I returned;

and traced

Fondly, though with an interest more
mild,

That secret spirit of humanity
Which, 'mid the calm oblivious tendencies

Of nature, 'mid her plants, and weeds,
and flowers,

And silent overgrowings, still survived.
The Old Man, noting this, resumed, and
said,

"My Friend! enough to sorrow you
have given,

The purposes of wisdom ask no more:
nor more would she have craved as due

to One

Who, in her worst distress, had oftentimes
felt

The unbounded might of prayer; and
learned, with soul

Fixed on the Cross, that consolation
springs,

From Sources deeper far than deepest
pain,

For the meek Sufferer? Why then
 should we read
 The forms of things with an unworthy
 eye?
 She sleeps in the calm earth, and peace is
 here.
 I well remember that those very plumes,
 Those weeds, and the high spear-grass
 on that wall,
 By mist and silent rain-drops silvered
 o'er,
 As once I passed, into my heart con-
 veyed
 So still an image of tranquillity,
 So calm and still, and looked so beauti-
 ful
 Amid the uneasy thoughts which filled
 my mind,
 That what we feel of sorrow and despair
 From ruin and from change, and all the
 grief
 That passing shows of Being leave be-
 hind,
 Appeared an idle dream, that could main-
 tain,
 Nowhere, dominion o'er the enlightened
 spirit

Whose meditative sympathies repose
 Upon the breast of Faith. I turned
 away,
 And walked along my road in happiness."

He ceased Ere long the sun declining
 as shot
 A slant and mellow radiance, which be-
 gan
 To fall upon us, while, beneath the trees,
 We sat on that low bench: and now we
 felt,
 Admonished thus, the sweet hour com-
 ing on.
 A linnets warbled from those lofty elms,
 A thrush sang loud, and other melodies,
 At distance heard, peopled the milder air.
 The old Man rose, and, with a sprightly
 mien
 Of hopeful preparation, grasped his staff;
 Together casting then a farewell look
 Upon those silent walls, we left the
 shade;
 And, ere the stars were visible, had
 reached
 A village-inn,—our evening resting-
 place

BOOK SECOND

THE SOLITARY

ARGUMENT

The Author describes his travels with the Wan-
 derer, whose character is further illustrated
 —Morning scene, and view of a Village Wake
 —Wanderer's account of a Friend whom he
 purposes to visit—View, from an eminence,
 of the Valley which his Friend had chosen for
 his retreat—Sound of singing from below—
 a funeral procession—Descent into the Valley
 —Observations drawn from thence—Wanderer
 at sight of a book accidentally discovered in
 a recess in the Valley—Meeting with the
 Wanderer's friend, the Solitary—Wanderer's
 description of the mode of burial in this
 mountainous district—Solitary contrasts with
 this, that of the individual carried a few
 minutes before from the cottage—The cottage
 entered—Description of the Solitary's apart-
 ment—Repast there—View, from the window,
 of two mountain summits; and the Solitary's
 description of the companionship they afford
 him—Account of the departed inmate of the
 cottage—Description of a grand spectacle
 upon the mountains, with its effect upon the
 Solitary's mind—Leave the house.

In days of yore how fortunately fared
 The Minstrel! wandering on from hall
 to hall,
 Baronial court or royal; cheered with
 gifts
 Munificent, and love, and ladies' praise;

W.P.

Now meeting on his road an armed
 knight,
 Now resting with a pilgrim by the side
 Of a clear brook:—beneath an abbey's
 roof
 One evening sumptuously lodged: the
 next,
 Humbly in a religious hospital;
 Or with some merry outlaws of the
 wood;
 Or haply shrouded in a hermit's cell.
 Him, sleeping or awake, the robber
 spared:
 He walked—protected from the sword
 of war
 By virtue of that sacred instrument
 His harp, suspended at the traveller's
 side:
 His dear companion wheresoe'er he went
 Opening from land to land an easy way
 By melody, and by the charm of verse.
 Yet not the noblest of that honoured
 Race
 Drew happier, loftier, more empassioned,
 thoughts
 From his long journeyings and eventful
 life,
 Than this obscure Itinerant had skill
 To gather, ranging through the tamer
 ground
 Of these our unimaginative days;

P P

Both while he trod the earth in humblest
guise
Accoutred with his burthen and his
staff;
And now, when free to move with lighter
pace.

What wonder, then, if I, whose fav-
ourite school
Hath been the fields, the roads, and rural
lanes,
Looked on this guide with reverential
ove?

Each with the other pleased, we now
pursued
Our journey, under favourable skies.
Turn wheresoe'er we would, he was a
light

Unfailing; not a hamlet could we pass,
Rarely a house, that did not yield to him
Remembrances; or from his tongue call
forth

Some way-beguiling tale. Nor less regard
Accompanied those strains of apt dis-
course,
Which nature's various objects might
inspire;

And in the silence of his face I read
His overflowing spirit. Birds and beasts,
And the mute fish that glances in the
stream,

And harmless reptile coiling in the sun,
And gorgeous insect hovering in the air,
The fowl domestic, and the household
dog—

In his capacious mind, he loved them all:
Their rights acknowledging he felt for all.
Oft was occasion given me to perceive
How the calm pleasures of the pasturing
herd

To happy contemplation soothed his
walk;

How the poor brute's condition, forced
to run

Its course of suffering in the public road,
Sad contrast! all too often smote his
heart

With unavailing pity. Rich in love
And sweet humanity, he was, himself,
To the degree that he desired, beloved.
Smiles of good-will from faces that he
knew

Greeted us all day long; we took our
seats

By many a cottage-hearth, where he
received

The welcome of an Inmate from afar,
And I at once forgot, I was a Stranger.

—Nor was he loth to enter ragged huts,
Huts where his charity was blest; his
voice

Heard as the voice of an experienced
friend.

And, sometimes—where the poor man
held dispute

With his own mind, unable to subdue
Impatience through inaptness to per-
ceive

General distress in his particular lot;
Or cherishing resentment, or in vain
Struggling against it; with a soul per-
plexed,

And finding in herself no steady power
To draw the line of comfort that divides
Calamity, the chastisement of Heaven,
From the injustice of our brother men—
To him appeal was made as to a judge;
Who, with an understanding heart,
allayed

The perturbation; listened to the plea;
Resolved the dubious point; and sen-
tence gave

So grounded, so applied, that it was
heard

With softened spirit, even when it con-
demned.

Such intercourse I witnessed, while
we roved,

Now as his choice directed, now as mine;
Or both, with equal readiness of will,
Our course submitting to the changeful
breeze

Of accident. But when the rising sun
Had three times called us to renew our
walk,

My Fellow-traveller, with earnest voice,
As if the thought were but a moment old,
Claimed absolute dominion for the day.
We started—and he led me towards the
hills,

Up through an ample vale, with higher
hills

Before us, mountains stern and desolate;
But, in the majesty of distance, now

Set off, and to our ken appearing fair
Of aspect, with aerial softness clad,
And beautified with morning's purple
beams.

The wealthy, the luxurious, by the
stress

Of business roused, or pleasure, ere their
time,

May roll in chariots, or provoke the hoofs
Of the fleet coursers they bestride, to
raise

From earth the dust of morning, slow to
rise;

And they, if blest with health and hearts
at ease,

Shall lack not their enjoyment:—but
how faint

Compared with ours! who, pacing side
by side,

Could, with an eye of leisure, look on all

That we beheld ; and lend, the listening
 sense
 To every grateful sound of earth and air ;
 Pausing at will—our spirits brace, our
 thoughts
 Pleasant as roses in the thickets blown,
 And pure as dew bathing their crimson
 leaves.

'Mount slowly, sun ! that we may jour-
 ney long.
 By this dark hill protected from thy
 beams !
 Such is the summer pilgrim's frequent
 wish :
 But quickly from among our morning
 thoughts
 'Twas chased away : for, toward the
 western side
 Of the broad vale, casting a casual glance,
 We saw a throng of people ;—wherefore
 met ?
 Blithe notes of music, suddenly let loose
 On the thrilled ear, and flags uprising,
 yield
 Prompt answer : they proclaim the
 annual Wake,
 Which the bright season favours.—Tabor
 and pipe
 In purpose join to hasten or reprove
 The laggard Rustic : and repay with
 boons
 Of merriment a party-coloured knot,
 Already formed upon the village-green.
 —Beyond the limits of the shadow cast
 By the broad hill, glistened upon our
 sight
 That gav assemblage. Round them and
 above,
 Glitter, with dark recesses interposed,
 Casement, and cottage-roof, and stems
 of trees
 Half-veiled in vapoury cloud, the silver
 steam
 Of dews fast melting on their leafy
 boughs
 By the strong sunbeam smitten. Like
 a mast
 Of gold, the Maypole shines ; as if the
 rays
 Of morning, aided by exhaling dew,
 With gladsome influence could re-ani-
 mate
 The faded garlands dangling from its
 sides.

Said I, " The music and the sprightly
 scene
 Invite us ; shall we quit our road, and
 join
 These festive matins ?"—He replied,
 " Not loth
 To linger I would here with you partake.

Not one hour merely, but till evening's
 close,
 The simple pastimes of the day and
 place.
 By the fleet Racers, ere the sun be set,
 The turf of yon large pasture will be
 skimmed ;
 There, too, the lusty Wrestlers shall con-
 tend :
 But know we not that he, who intermits
 The appointed task and duties of the day,
 Untunes full of the pleasures of the day :
 Checking the finer spirits that refuse
 To flow, when purposes are lightly
 changed ?
 A length of journey yet remains un-
 traced :
 Let us proceed." Then, pointing with
 his staff
 Raised toward those craggy summits,
 his intent
 He thus imparted :—
 " In a spot that lies
 Among yon mountain fastnesses con-
 cealed,
 You will receive, before the hour of noon,
 Good recompense, I hope, for this day's
 toil.
 From sight of One who lives secluded
 there,
 Lonesome and lost : of whom, and whose
 past life,
 (Not to forestall such knowledge as may
 be
 More faithfully collected from himself)
 This brief communication shall suffice.

Though now sojourning there, he, like
 myself,
 Sprang from a stock of lowly parentage
 Among the wilds of Scotland, in a tract
 Where many a sheltered and well-tended
 plant,
 Bears, on the humblest ground of social
 life,
 Blossoms of piety and innocence.
 Such grateful promises his youth dis-
 played :
 And, having shown in study forward
 zeal,
 He to the Ministry was duly called :
 And straight, incited by a curious mind
 Filled with vague hopes, he undertook
 the charge
 Of Chaplain to a military troop
 Cheered by the Highland bagpipe, as
 they marched
 In plaided vest,—his fellow-country-
 men.
 This office filling, yet by native power
 And force of native inclination made
 An intellectual ruler in the haunts
 Of social vanity, he walked the world.

Gay, and affecting graceful gaiety ;
 Lax, buoyant—less a pastor with his
 flock
 Than a soldier among soldiers—lived and
 roamed
 Where Fortune led :—and Fortune, who
 oft proves
 The careless wanderer's friend, to him
 made known
 A blooming Lady—a conspicuous flower,
 Admired for beauty, for her sweetness
 praised ;
 Whom he had sensibility to love,
 Ambition to attempt, and skill to win.

For this fair Bride, most rich in gifts
 of mind,
 Nor sparingly endowed with worldly
 wealth,
 His office he relinquished : and retired
 From the world's notice to a rural home.
 Youth's season yet with him was scarcely
 past,
 And she was in youth's prime. How
 free their love,
 How full their joy ! 'Till, pitiable doom !
 In the short course of one undreaded
 year,
 Death blasted all. Death suddenly
 o'erthrew
 Two lovely Children—all that they
 possessed !
 The Mother followed :—miserably bare
 The one Survivor stood ; he wept, he
 prayed
 For his dismissal, day and night, com-
 pelled
 To hold communion with the grave, and
 face
 With pain the regions of eternity.
 An uncomplaining apathy displaced
 This anguish ; and, indifferent 'to delight,
 To aim and purpose, he consumed his
 days,
 To private interest dead, and public care.
 So lived he ; so he might have died.

But now,
 To the wide world's astonishment, ap-
 peared
 A glorious opening, the unlooked-for
 dawn,
 That promised everlasting joy to France !
 Her voice of social transport reached
 even him !
 He broke from his contracted bounds,
 repaired
 To the great City, an emporium then
 Of golden expectations, and receiving
 Freights every day from a new world of
 hope.
 Thither his popular talents he transferred ;
 And, from the pulpit, zealously main-
 tained

The cause of Christ and civil liberty,
 As one, and moving to one glorious end.
 Intoxicating service ! I might say
 A happy service : for he was sincere
 As vanity and fondness for applause,
 And new and shapeless wishes, would
 allow.

That righteous cause (such power hath
 freedom) bound,
 For one hostility, in friendly league,
 Ethereal natures and the worst of slaves ;
 Was served by rival advocates that came
 From regions opposite as heaven and
 hell.

One courage seemed to animate them all :
 And, from the dazzling conquests daily
 gained.

By their united efforts, there arose
 A proud and most presumptuous confi-
 dence

In the transcendent wisdom of the age,
 And her discernment ; not alone in rights,
 And in the origin and bounds of power
 Social and temporal ; but in laws divine,
 Deduced by reason, or to faith revealed.
 An overweening trust was raised : and
 fear

Cast out, alike of person and of thing.
 Plague from this union spread, whose
 subtle bane

The strongest did not easily escape ;
 And he, what wonder ! took a mortal
 taint.

How shall I trace the change, how bear
 to tell

That he broke faith with them whom
 he had laid

In earth's dark chambers, with a Chris-
 tian's hope !

An infidel contempt of holy writ
 Stole by degrees upon his mind : and
 hence

Life, like that Roman Janus, double-
 faced ;

Vilest hypocrisy—the laughing, gay
 Hypocrisy, not leagued with fear, but
 pride.

Smooth words he had to wheedle simple
 souls ;

But, for disciples of the inner school,
 Old freedom was old servitude, and they
 The wisest whose opinions stooped the
 least

To known restraints : and who most
 boldly drew

Hopeful prognostications from a creed,
 That, in the sight of false philosophy,
 Spread like a halo round a misty moon,
 Widening its circle as the storms advance.

His sacred function was at length
 renounced ;

And every day and every place enjoyed

The unshackled layman's natural liberty ;

Speech, manners, morals, all without disguise.

I do not wish to wrong him ; though the course

Of private life licentiously displayed

Unhallowed actions—planted like a crown

Upon the insolent aspiring brow

Of spurious notions—worn as open signs

Of prejudice subdued—still he retained,

'Mid much abasement, what he had received

From nature, an intense and glowing mind.

Wherefore, when humbled Liberty grew weak,

And mortal sickness on her face appeared,

He coloured objects to his own desire

As with a lover's passion. Yet his moods

Of pain were keen as those of better men,

Nay keener, as his fortitude was less :

And he continued, when worse days were come,

To deal about his sparkling eloquence,

Struggling against the strange reverse

With zeal that shewed like happiness. But, in despite

Of all this outside bravery, within,

He neither felt encouragement nor hope :

For moral dignity, and strength of mind,

Were wanting ; and simplicity of life ;

And reverence for himself ; and, last and best,

Confiding thoughts, through love and fear of Him

Before whose sight the troubles of this world

Are vain, as billows in a tossing sea.

The glory of the times fading away—

The splendour, which had given a festal air

To self-importance, hallowed it, and veiled

From his own sight—this gone, he forfeited

All joy in human nature ; was consumed,

And vexed, and chafed, by levity and scorn,

And fruitless indignation ; galled by pride ;

Made desperate by contempt of men who thrive

Before his sight in power or fame, and won,

Without desert, what he desired ; weak men,

Too weak even for his envy or his hate !

Tormented thus, after a wandering course

Of discontent, and inwardly oppress

With malady—in part, I fear, provoked

By weariness of life—he fixed his home,

Or, rather say, sate down by very chance,

Among these rugged hills ; where now he dwells,

And wastes the sad remainder of his hours,

Steeped in a self-indulging spleen, that wants not

Its own voluptuousness :—on this resolved,

With this content, that he will live and die

Forgotten,—at safe distance from 'a world

Not moving to his mind.'"

These serious words

Closed the preparatory notices

That served my Fellow-traveller to beguile

The way, while we advanced up that wide vale.

Diverging now (as if his quest had been

Some secret of the mountains, cavern, fall

Of water, or some lofty eminence,

Renowned for splendid prospect far and wide)

We scaled, without a track to ease our steps,

A steep ascent : and reached a dreary plain,

With a tumultuous waste of huge hill tops

Before us : savage region ! which I paced

Dispirited : when, all at once, behold !

Beneath our feet, a little lowly vale,

A lowly vale, and yet uplifted high

Among the mountains ; even as if the spot

Had been from eldest time by wish of theirs

So placed, to be shut out from all the world !

Urn-like it was in shape, deep as an urn ;

With rocks encompassed, save that to the south

Was one small opening, where a heath-clad ridge

Supplied a boundary less abrupt and close ;

A quiet treeless nook, with two green fields,

A liquid pool that glittered in the sun,

And one bare dwelling : one abode, no more !

It seemed the home of poverty and toil,

Though not of want : the little fields, made green

By husbandry of many thrifty years,

Paid cheerful tribute to the moorland house.

—There crows the cock, single in his domain :

The small birds find in spring no thicket there

To shroud them ; only from the neighbouring vales

The cuckoo, straggling up to the hill tops,
Shouteth faint tidings of some gladder place.

Ah ! what a sweet Recess, thought I, is here !

Instantly throwing down my limbs at ease

Upon a bed of heath ;—full many a spot
Of hidden beauty have I chanced to espy
Among the mountains : never one like this ;

So lonesome, and so perfectly secure ;
Not melancholy—no, for it is green,
And bright, and fertile, furnished in itself

With the few needful things that life requires.

—In rugged arms how softly does it lie,
How tenderly protected ! Far and near
We have an image of the pristine earth.
The planet in its nakedness : were this
Man's only dwelling, sole appointed seat,
First, last, and single, in the breathing world,

It could not be more quiet : peace is here
Or nowhere ; days unruffled by the gale
Of public news or private : years that pass

Forgetfully ; uncalled upon to pay
The common penalties of mortal life,
Sickness, or accident, or grief, or pain.

On these and kindred thoughts intent
I lay

In silence musing by my Comrade's side,
He also silent : when from out the heart
Of that profound abyss a solemn voice,
Or several voices in one solemn sound,
Was heard ascending : mournful, deep,
and slow

The cadence, as of psalms—a funeral dirge !

We listened, looking down upon the hut,
But seeing no one : meanwhile from below

The strain continued, spiritual as before ;
And now distinctly could I recognise
These words :—*'Shall in the grave thy love be known,*

In death thy faithfulness ?'—“ God rest his soul ! ”

Said the old man, abruptly breaking silence,—

“ He is departed, and finds peace at last ! ”

This scarcely spoken, and those holy strains

Not ceasing, forth appeared in view a band

Of rustic persons, from behind the hut
Bearing a coffin in the midst, with which
They shaped their course along the sloping side

Of that small valley, singing as they moved ;

A sober company and few, the men
Bare-headed, and all decently attired !

Some steps when they had thus advanced,
the dirge

Ended ; and, from the stillness that ensued

Recovering, to my Friend I said, “ You spake,

Methought, with apprehension that these rites

Are paid to him upon whose shy retreat
This day we purposed to intrude.”—“ I did so,

But let us hence, that we may learn the truth :

Perhaps it is not he but some one else
For whom this pious service is performed :
Some other tenant of the solitude.”

So, to a steep and difficult descent
Trusting ourselves, we wound from crag to crag,

Where passage could be won : and, as the last

Of the mute train, behind the heathy top

Of that off-sloping outlet, disappeared,
I, more impatient in my downward course,

Had landed upon easy ground ; and there
Stood waiting for my Comrade. When behold

An object that enticed my steps aside !
A narrow, winding, entry opened out

Into a platform—that lay, sheepfold-wise,

Enclosed between an upright mass of rock

And one old moss-grown wall ;—a cool recess,

And fanciful ! For where the rock and wall

Met in an angle, hung a penthouse, framed

By thrusting two rude staves into the wall

And overlaying them with mountain sods ;

To weather-fend a little turf-built seat
Whereon a full-grown man might rest, nor dread

The burning sunshine, or a transient shower ;

But the whole plainly wrought by children's hands !
Whose skill had thronged the floor with
a proud show
Of baby-houses, curiously arranged ;
Nor wanting ornament of walks between,
With mimic trees inserted in the turf,
And gardens interposed. Pleased with
the sight,

I could not choose but beckon to my
Guide,
Who, entering round him threw a careless glance,

Impatient to pass on, when I exclaimed,
"Lo ! what is here ?" and, stooping
down, drew forth

A book, that, in the midst of stones and
moss
And wreck of party-coloured earthen-
ware,

Amplly disposed, had lent it, help to raise
One of those petty structures. "His
it must be,"

Exclaimed the Wanderer, "cannot but
be his,

And he is gone !" The book, which in
my hand

Had opened of itself (for it was swollen
With searching damp, and seemingly
had lain

To the injurious elements exposed
From week to week,) I found to be a work
In the French tongue, a Novel of Voltaire,
His famous Optimist, "Unhappy Man !"
Exclaimed my Friend : "here then has
been to him

Retreat within retreat, a sheltering-place
Within how deep a shelter ! He had
fits,

Even to the last, of genuine tenderness,
And loved the haunts of children : here,
no doubt,

Pleasing and pleasant, he shared their
simple sports,

Or sate companionless ; and here the
book,

Left and forgotten in his careless way,
Must by the cottage-children have been
found :

Heaven bless them, and their inconsiderate work !

To what odd purpose have the darlings
turned

This sad memorial of their hapless friend !

"Me," said I, "most doth it surprise,
to find

Such book in such a place !"—"A book
it is,"

He answered, "to the Person suited
well,

Though little suited to surrounding
things :

'Tis strange, I grant ; and stranger still
had been

To see the Man who owned it, dwelling
here,

With one poor shepherd, far from all the
world !—

Now, if our errand hath been thrown
away,

As from these intimations I forebode,
Grieved shall I be—less for my sake than

yours,
And least of all for him who is no more."

By this, the book was in the old Man's
hand ;

And he continued, glancing on the leaves
An eye of scorn :—"The lover," said he,

"doomed
To love when hope hath failed him—
whom no depth

Of privacy is deep enough to hide,
Hath yet his bracelet or his lock of hair,

And that is joy to him. When change
of times

Hath summoned kings to scaffolds, do
but give

The faithful servant, who must hide his
head

Henceforth in whatsoever nook he may,
A kerchief sprinkled with his master's

blood,
And he too hath his comforter. How

poor,
Beyond all poverty how destitute,
Must that Man have been left, who,

hither driven,
Flying or seeking, could yet bring with
him

No dearer relique, and no better stay,
Than this dull product of a scoffer's pen,

Impure conceits discharging from a
heart

Hardened by impious pride !—I did not
fear

To tax you with this journey ;"—mildly
said

My venerable Friend, as forth we stepped
Into the presence of the cheerful light—

"For I have knowledge that you do not
shrink

From moving spectacles ;—but let us
on."

So speaking, on he went, and at the
word

I followed, till he made a sudden stand :
For full in view, approaching through a

gate
That opened from the enclosure of green
fields

Into the rough uncultivated ground,
Behold the Man whom he had fancied

dead !

I knew from his deportment, mien, and dress,
That it could be no other ; a pale face,
A meagre person, tall, and in a garb
Not rustic—dull and faded like himself !
He saw us not, though distant but few
steps ;
For he was busy, dealing, from a store
Upon a broad leaf, carried, choicest
strings
Of red ripe currants ; gift by which he
strove,
With intermixture of endearing words,
To soothe a Child, who walked beside
him, weeping
As if disconsolate.—“ They to the grave
Are bearing him, my Little-one,” he said,
“ To the dark pit ; but he will feel no
pain ;
His body is at rest, his soul in heaven.”

More might have followed—but my
honoured Friend
Broke in upon the Speaker with a frank
And cordial greeting.—Vivid was the
light
That flashed and sparkled from the
other's eyes ;
He was all fire : no shadow on his brow
Remained, nor sign of sickness on his
face.
Hands joined he with his Visitant,—a
grasp,
An eager grasp ; and many moments'
space—
When the first glow of pleasure was no
more,
And, of the sad appearance which at once
Had vanished, much was come and com-
ing back—
An amicable smile retained the life
Which it had unexpectedly received,
Upon his hollow cheek. “ How kind,”
he said,
“ Nor could your coming have been bet-
ter timed ;
For this, you see, is in our narrow world
A day of sorrow. I have here a charge”—
And, speaking thus, he patted tenderly
The sun-burnt forehead of the weeping
child—
“ A little mourner, whom it is my task
To comfort ;—but how came ye ?—if yon
track
(Which doth at once befriend us and be-
tray)
Conducted hither your most welcome
feet,
Ye could not miss the funeral train—they
yet
Have scarcely disappeared.” “ This
blooming Child,”
Said the old Man, “ is of an age to weep

At any grave or solemn spectacle,
Inly distressed or overpowered with awe,
He knows not wherefore ;—but the boy
to-day,
Perhaps is shedding orphan's tears ; you
also
Must have sustained a loss.”—“ The
hand of Death,”
He answered, “ has been here ; but could
not well
Have fallen more lightly, if I had not
fallen
Upon myself.”—The other left these
words
Unnoticed, thus continuing.—
“ From yon crag,
Down whose steep sides we dropped into
the vale,
We heard the hymn they sang—a
solemn sound
Heard any where : but in a place like this,
'Tis more than human ! Many precious
rites
And customs of our rural ancestry
Are gone, of stealing from us ! this, I
hope,
Will last for ever. Oft on my way have I
Stood still, though but a casual passenger,
So much I felt the awfulness of life,
In that one moment when the corse is
lifted
In silence, with a hush of decency ;
Then from the threshold moves with song
of peace,
And confidential yearnings, towards its
home,
Its final home on earth. What traveller
—who—
(How far so'er a stranger) does not own
The bond of brotherhood, when he sees
them go,
A mute procession on the houseless road ;
Or passing by some single tenement
Or clustered dwellings, where again they
raise
The monitory voice ? But most of all
It touches, it confirms, and elevates,
Then, when the body, soon to be con-
signed
Ashes to ashes, dust bequeathed to dust,
Is raised from the church-aisle, and for-
ward borne
Upon the shoulders of the next in love,
The nearest in affection or in blood :
Yea, by the very mourners who had knelt
Beside the coffin, resting on its lid
In silent grief their unlifted heads,
And heard meanwhile the Psalmist's
mournful plaint,
And that most awful scripture which de-
clares
We shall not sleep, but we shall all be
changed !

—Have I not seen—ye likewise may have seen—
 Son, husband, brothers—brothers side by side,
 And son and father also side by side,
 Rise from that posture :—and in concert move,
 On the green turf following the vested Priest,
 Four dear supporters of one senseless weight,
 From which they do not shrink, and under which
 They faint not, but advance towards the open grave
 Step after step—together, with their firm
 Unhidden faces, he that suffers most,
 He outwardly, and inwardly perhaps,
 The most serene, with most undaunted eye :—
 O! blest are they who live and die like these,
 Loved with such love, and with such sorrow injured ! ”

“That poor Man taken hence to-day,”
 replied
 The Solitary, with a faint sarcastic smile
 Which did not please me, “must be deemed, I fear,
 Of the unblest ; for he will surely sink
 Into his mother earth without such pomp
 Of grief, depart without occasion given
 By him for such array of fortitude.
 Full seventy winters hath he lived, and mark !
 This simple Child will mourn his one short hour,
 And I shall miss him ; scanty tribute ! yet,
 This wanting, he would leave the sight of men,
 If love were his sole claim upon their care,
 Like a ripe date which in the desert falls
 Without a hand to gather it.”

At this
 I interposed, though loth to speak, and said,
 “Can it be thus among so small a band
 As ye must needs be here ? in such a place
 I would not willingly, methinks, lose sight
 Of a departing cloud.” — “ ’Twas not for love,”
 Answered the sick Man with a careless voice—
 “That I came hither ; neither have I found
 Among associates who have power of speech,
 Nor in such other converse as is here,
 Temptation so prevailing as to change

That mood, or undermine my first resolve.”
 Then, speaking in like careless sort, he said
 To my benign Companion,—“Pity ’tis
 That fortune did not guide you to this house
 A few days earlier ; then would you have seen
 What stuff the Dwellers in a solitude,
 That seems by Nature hollowed out to be
 The seat and bosom of pure innocence,
 Are made of ; an ungracious matter this !
 Which, for truth’s sake, yet in remembrance too
 Of past discussions with this zealous friend
 And advocate of humble life, I now
 Will force upon his notice ; undeterred
 By the example of his own pure course,
 And that respect and deference which a soul
 May fairly claim, by niggard age enriched
 In what she most doth value, love of God
 And his frail creature Man ;—but ye shall hear.
 I talk—and ye are standing in the sun
 Without refreshment ! ”

Quickly had he spoken,
 And, with light steps still quicker than his words,
 Led toward the Cottage. Homely was the spot :
 And, to my feeling, ere we reached the door,
 Had almost a forbidding nakedness :
 Less fair, I grant, even painfully less fair,
 Than it appeared when from the beetling rock
 We had looked down upon it. All within,
 As left by the departed company,
 Was silent ; save the solitary clock
 That on mine ear ticked with a mournful sound.—
 Following our Guide, we clomb the cottage-stairs
 And reached a small apartment dark and low,
 Which was no sooner entered than our Host
 Said gaily, “This is my domain, my cell,
 My hermitage, my cabin, what you will—
 I love it better than a snail his house.
 But now ye shall be feasted with our best.”

So, with more ardour than an unripe girl
 Left one day mistress of her mother’s stores,

He went about his hospitable task.
 My eyes were busy, and my thoughts no less,
 And pleased I looked upon my grey-haired Friend,
 As if to thank him; he returned that look,
 Cheered, plainly, and yet serious. What a wreck
 Had we about us! scattered was the floor,
 And, in like sort, chair, window-seat, and shelf,
 With books, maps, fossils, withered plants and flowers,
 And tufts of mountain moss. Mechanic tools
 Lay intermixed with scraps of paper, some
 Scribbled with verse: a broken angling-rod
 And shattered telescope, together linked
 By cobwebs, stood within a dusty nook;
 And instruments of music, some half-made,
 Some in disgrace, hung dangling from the walls.
 But speedily the promise was fulfilled;
 A feast before us, and a courteous Host
 Inviting us in glee to sit and eat.
 A napkin, white as foam of that rough brook
 By which it had been bleached, o'erspread
 the board;
 And was itself half-covered with a store
 Of dainties,—oaten bread, curd, cheese,
 and cream;
 And cakes of butter curiously embossed,
 Butter that had imbibed from meadow-flowers
 A golden hue, delicate as their own
 Faintly reflected in a lingering stream.
 Nor lacked, for more delight on that warm day,
 Our table, small parade of garden fruits,
 And whortle-berries from the mountain side.
 The Child, who long ere this had stilled
 his sobs,
 Was now a help to his late comforter,
 And moved, a willing Page, as he was bid,
 Ministering to our need.

In genial mood,
 While at our pastoral banquet thus we sate
 Fronting the window of that little cell,
 I could not, ever and anon, forbear
 To glance an upward look on two huge Peaks,
 That from some other vale peered into this.
 "Those lusty twins," exclaimed our host,
 "if here

It were your lot to dwell, would soon become
 Your prized companions.—Many are the noies
 Which, in his tuneless course, the wind
 draws forth
 From rocks, woods, caverns, heaths, and dashing shores;
 And well those lofty brethren bear their part
 In the wild concert—chiefly when the storm
 Rides high; then all the upper air they fill
 With roaring sound, that ceases not to slow,
 Like smoke, along the level of the blast,
 In mighty current; theirs, too, is the song
 Of stream and headlong flood that seldom fails;
 And, in the grim and breathless hour of noon,
 Methinks that I have heard them echo back
 The thunder's greeting. Nor have nature's laws
 Left them ungifted with a power to yield
 Music of finer tone: a harmony,
 So do I call it, though it be the hand
 Of silence, though there be no voice;—the clouds,
 The mist, the shadows, light of golden suns,
 Motions of moonlight, all come thither—touch,
 And have an answer—thither come, and shape
 A language not unwelcome to sick hearts
 And idle spirits:—there the sun himself,
 At the calm close of summer's longest day,
 Rests his substantial orb;—between those heights
 And on the top of either pinnacle,
 More keenly than elsewhere in night's blue vault,
 Sparkle the stars, as of their station proud.
 Thoughts are not busier in the mind of man
 Than the mute agents stirring there:—alone
 Here do I sit and watch.—"
 A fall of voice,
 Regretted like the nightingale's last note,
 Had scarcely closed this high-wrought strain of rapture
 Ere with inviting smile the Wanderer said:
 "Now for the tale with which you threatened us!"

"In truth the threat escaped me un-
awares :

Should the tale tire you, let this challenge
stand

For my excuse. Dissevered from man-
kind,

As to your eyes and thoughts we must
have seemed

When ye looked down upon us from the
crag,

Islanders mid a stormy mountain sea.
We are not so;—perpetually we touch

Upon the vulgar ordinances of the world ;
And he, whom this our cottage hath to-
day

Relinquished, lived dependent for his
bread

Upon the laws of public charity.
The Housewife, tempted by such slender

gains

As might from that occasion be distilled,
Opened, as she before had done for me.

Her doors to admit this homeless Pen-
sioner ;

The portion gave of coarse but whole-
some fare

Which appetite required—a blind dull
nook,

Such as she had, the kennel of his rest !
This, in itself no ill, would yet have been

all borne in earlier life ; but his was now
The still contentedness of seventy years.

Calm did he sit under the wide-spread
tree

Of his old age ; and yet less calm and
meek,

Winningly meek or venerably calm,
Than slow and torpid ; paying in this wise

A penalty, if penalty it were,
For spendthrift feats, excesses of his

prime.
I loved the old Man, for I pitied him !

A task it was, I own, to hold discourse
With one so slow in gathering up his

thoughts,
But he was a cheap pleasure to my eyes :

Mild, inoffensive, ready in his way,
And helpful to his utmost power : and

there
Our housewife knew full well what she

possessed !
He was her vassal of all labour, tilled

Her garden, from the pasture fetched her
kine :

And, one among the orderly array
Of hay-makers, beneath the burning sun

Maintained his place ; or heedfully pur-
sued

His course, on errands bound, to other
vales,

Leading sometimes an inexperienced
child

Too young for any profitable task.

So* moved he like a shadow that per-
formed

Substantial service. Mark me now, and
learn

For what reward !—The moon her
monthly round

Hath not completed since our dame, the
queen

Of this one cottage and this lonely dale.
Into my little sanctuary rushed—

Voice to a rueful treble humanized,
And features in deplorable dismay.

I treat the matter lightly, but, alas !
It is most serious : persevering rain

Had fallen in torrents : all the mountain
tops

Were hidden, and black vapours coursed
their sides :

This had I seen, and saw ; but, till she
spoke,

Was wholly ignorant that my ancient
Friend—

Who at her bidding, early and alone,
Had clomb aloft to delve the moorland

turf
For winter fuel—to his noontide meal

Returned not, and now, haply, on the
heights

Lay at the mercy of this raging storm.
' Inhuman ! '—said I, ' was an old Man's

life
Not worth the trouble of a thought ?—

alas !
This notice comes too late.' With joy I

saw
Her husband enter—from a distant vale.

We sallied forth together ; found the tools
Which the neglected veteran had drop-
ped,

But through all quarters looked for him
in vain.

We shouted—but no answer ! Darkness
fell

Without remission of the blast or shower,
And fears for our own safety drove us

home.

I, who weep little, did, I will confess,
The moment I was seated here alone.

Honour my little cell with some few tears
Which anger and resentment could not

dry.
All night the storm endured ; and, soon

as help
Had been collected from the neighbour-
ing vale,

With morning we renewed our quest : the
wind

Was fallen, the rain abated, but the hills
Lay shrouded in impenetrable mist ;

And long and hopelessly we sought in
vain :

'Till, chancing on that lofty ridge to pass

A heap of ruin—almost without walls
And wholly without roof (the bleached
remains

Of a small chapel, where, in ancient time,
The peasants of these lonely valleys used
To meet for worship on that central
height)—

We there espied the object of our search,
Lying full three parts buried among
tufts

Of heath-plant, under and above him
strewn,

To baffle, as he might, the watery storm :
And there we found him breathing
peaceably.

Snug as a child that hides itself in sport
Mid a green hay-cock in a sunny field.
We spake—he made reply, but would not
stir

At our entreaty : less from want of power
Than apprehension and bewildering
thoughts.

So was he lifted gently from the ground,
And with their freight homeward the
shepherds moved

Through the dull mist, I following—when
a step,

A single step, that freed me from the
skirts

Of the blind vapour, opened to my view
Glory beyond all glory ever seen
By waking sense or by the dreaming soul !
The appearance, instantaneously dis-
closed,

Was of a mighty city—boldly say
A wilderness of building, sinking far
And self-withdrawn into a boundless
depth,

Far sinking into splendor—without
end !

Fabric it seemed of diamond and of gold,
With alabaster domes, and silver spires,
And blazing terrace upon terrace, high
Uplifted ; here, serene pavilion ; bright ;
In avenues disposed ; there, towers be-
girt

With battlements that on their restless
fronts

Bore stars—illumination of all gems !
By earthly nature had the effect been
wrought

Upon the dark materials of the storm
Now pacified ; on them, and on the coves
And mountain-steeps and summits,
whereunto

The vapours had receded, taking there
Their station under a cerulean sky.

Oh, 'twas an unimaginable sight !

Clouds, mists, streams, watery rocks and
emerald turf,

Clouds of all tincture, rocks and sapphire
sky,

Confused, commingled, mutually in-
flamed,

Molten together, and composing thus,
Each lost in each, that marvellous array
Of temple, palace, citadel, and huge
Fantastic pomp of structure without
name,

In fleecy fold, voluminous, enwrapped.
Right in the midst, where interspace
appeared

Of open court, an object like a throne
Under a shining canopy of state
Stood fixed : and fixed resemblances were
seen

To implements of ordinary use,
But vast in size, in substance glorified ;
Such as by Hebrew Prophets were beheld
In vision forms uncolt of, mightiest
power

For admiration and mysteriour awe.

This little Vale, a dwelling-place of Man,
Laf low beneath my feet : 'twas visible—
I saw not, but I felt that it was there.

That which I saw was the revealed abode
Of Spirits in beatitude : my heart

Swelled in my breast.—' I have been
dead,' I cried,

' And now I live ! Oh ! wherefore do I
live ? '

And with that pang I prayed to be no
more !—

—But I forget our Charge, as utterly
I then forgot him :—there I stood and
gazed :

The apparition faded not away,
And I descended.

Having reached the house,
I found its rescued inmate safely lodged,
And in serene possession of himself,
Beside a fire whose genial warmth seemed
met

By a faint shining from the heart, a gleam
Of comfort, spread over his pallid face.
Great show of joy the housewife made,
and truly

Was glad to find her conscience set at
ease ;

And not less glad, for sake of her good
name,

That the poor Sufferer had escaped with
life.

But, though he seemed at first to have re-
ceived

No harm, and uncomplaining as before
Went through his usual tasks, a silent
change

Soon showed itself : he lingered three
short weeks ;

And in the cottage hath been borne to-
day.

So ends my dolorous tale, and glad I
am

That it is ended." At these words he turned—
And, with blithe air of open fellowship,
Brought from the cupboard wine and stouter cheer,
Like one who would be merry. Seeing this,

My grey-haired Friend said courteously—
"Nay, nay,
You have regaled us as a hermit ought ;
Now let us forth into the sun !" —Our Host
Rose, though reluctantly, and forth we went.

BOOK THIRD

DESPONDENCY

• ARGUMENT

Images in the Valley—Another Retreat in it entered and described—Wanderer's sensations—Solitary's excited by the same objects—Contrast between these—Despondency of the Solitary newly reproved—Conversion exhibiting the Solitary's past and present opinions and feelings, till he enters upon his own History at length—His domestic felicity—Afflictions—Dejection—Roused by the French Revolution—Disappointment and disgust—Voyage to America—Disappointment and disgust pursue him—His return—His languor and depression of mind, from want of faith in the great truths of Religion, and want of confidence in the virtue of Mankind

A HUMMING-BEE—A little tinkling rill—
A pair of falcons wheeling on the wing.
In clamorous agitation, round the crest
Of a tall rock, their airy citadel—
By each and all of these the pensive ear
Was greeted, in the silence that ensued,
When through the cottage-threshold we
had passed,
And, deep within that lonesome valley,
stood
Once more beneath the concave of a blue
And cloudless sky.—Anon exclaimed our
Host,
Triumphantly dispersing with the taunt
The shade of discontent which on his
brow
Had gathered,—“Ye have left my cell,
—but see
How Nature hems you in with friendly
arms !
And by her help ye are my prisoners still.
But which way shall I lead you ?—how
contrive,
In spot so parsimoniously endowed,
That the brief hours, which yet remain,
may reap
Some recompense of knowledge or de-
light ?”
So saying, round he looked, as if per-
plexed ;
And, to remove those doubts, my grey-
haired Friend
Said—“Shall we take this pathway for
our guide ?—
Upward it winds, as if, in summer heats,

Its line had first been fashioned by the
flock
Seeking a place of refuge at the root
Of yon black Yew-tree, whose protruded
boughs
Darkened the silver bosom of the crag.
From which she draws her meagre sus-
tenance.
There in commodious shelter may we rest.
Oh let us trace this streamlet to its
source :
Feebly it tinkles with an earthy sound,
And a few steps may bring us to the spot
Where, haply, crowned with flowerets
and green herbs,
The mountain infant to the sun comes
forth,
Like human life from darkness.”—A
quick turn
Through a strait passage of encumbered
ground,
Proved that such hope was vain :—for
now we stood
Shut out from prospect of the open vale,
And saw the water, that composed this
rill,
Descending, disembodied, and diffused
O'er the smooth surface of an ample
crag,
Lofty, and steep, and naked as a tower.
All further progress here was barred ;—
And who,
Thought I, if master of a vacant hour,
Here would not linger, willingly detained?
Whether to such wild objects he were led
When copious rains have magnified the
stream
Into a loud and white-robed waterfall,
Or introduced at this more quiet time.

Upon a semicircle of surf-clad ground,
The hidden nook discovered to our view,
A mass of rock, resembling, as it lay
Right at the foot of that moist precipice,
A stranded ship, with keel upturned, that
rests
Fearless of winds and waves. Three
several stones
Stood near, of smaller size, and not unlike
To monumental pillars : and, from these
Some little space disjoined, a pair were
seen,

That with united shoulders bore aloft
 A fragment, like an altar, flat and smooth :
 Barren the tablet, yet thereon appeared
 A tall and shining holly, that had found
 A hospitable rhink, and stood upright,
 As if inserted by some human hand
 In mockery, to wither in the sun,
 Or lay its beauty flat before a breeze—
 The first that entered. But no breeze
 did now
 Find entrance ; —high or low appeared
 no trace
 Of motion, save the water tiffat descended,
 Diffused adown that barrier of steep
 rock,
 And softly creeping, like a breath of air,
 Such as is sometimes seen, and hardly
 seen,
 To brush the still breast of a crystal lake.

“ Behold a cabinet for sages built,
 Which kings might envy ! ” —Praise to
 this effect
 Broke from the happy old Man’s rever-
 end lip :
 Who to the Solitary turned, and said,
 “ In sooth, with love’s familiar privilege,
 You have decied the wealth which is
 your own.
 Among these rocks and stones, me-
 thinks, I see
 More than the heedless impress that be-
 longs
 To lonely nature’s casual work : they
 bear
 A semblance strange of power intelligent,
 And of design not wholly worn away.
 Boldest of plants that ever faced the
 wind,
 How gracefully that slender shrub looks
 forth
 From its fantastic birth-place ! And I
 own,
 Some shadowy intimations haunt me
 here,
 That in these shows a chronicle survives
 Of purposes akin to those of Man,
 But wrought with nightier arm than now
 prevails.
 —Voiceless the stream descends into the
 gulf
 With timid lapse ; —and lo ! while in this
 strait
 I stand—the chasm of sky above my
 head
 Is heaven’s profoundest azure ; no do-
 main
 For fickle, short-lived clouds to occupy,
 Or to pass through ; but rather an abyss
 In which the everlasting stars abide ;
 And whose soft gloom, and boundless
 depth, might tempt
 The curious eye to look for them by day.

—H il Contemplation ! from the stately
 towers,
 Reared by the industrious hand of hu-
 man art
 To lift thee high above the misty air
 And turbulence of murmuring cities vast ;
 From academic groves, that have for
 thee
 Been planted, hither come and find a
 lodge
 To which thou mayst resort for holier
 peace,—
 From whose calm centre thou, through
 height or depth,
 Mayst penetrate, wherever truth shall
 lead ;
 Measuring through all degrees, until the
 scale
 Of time and conscious nature disappear,
 Lost in unsearchable eternity ! ”

A pause ensued ; and with minute
 care
 We scanned the various features of the
 scene :
 And soon the Tenant of that lonely vale
 With courteous voice thus spake : —
 “ I should have grieved
 Hereafter, not escaping self-reproach,
 If from my poor retirement ye had gone
 Leaving this nook unvisited : but, in
 sooth,
 Your unexpected presence had so roused
 My spirits, that they were bent on enter-
 prise ;
 And, like an ardent hunter, I forgot,
 Or, shall I say ? —disdained, the game
 that lurks
 At my own door. The shapes before
 our eyes
 And their arrangement, doubtless must
 be deemed
 The sport of Nature, aided by blind
 Chance
 Rudely to mock the works of toiling Man.
 And hence, this upright shaft of unhewn
 stone,
 From Fancy, willing to set off her stores
 By sounding titles, hath acquired the
 name
 Of Pompey’s pillar ; that I gravely style
 My Theban obelisk ; and there, behold
 A Druid cromlech ! —thus I entertain
 The antiquarian humour, and am pleased
 To skim along the surfaces of things,
 Beguiling harmlessly the listless hours.
 But if the spirit be oppressed by sense
 Of instability, revolt, decay,
 And change, and emptiness, these freaks
 of Nature
 And her blind helper Chance, do them
 suffice
 To quicken, and to aggravate—to feed

Pity and scorn, and melancholy pride,
Not less than that huge Pile (from some
abyss

Of mortal power unquestionably sprung)
Whose hoary diadem of pendent rocks
Confines the shrill-voiced whirlwind,
round and round

Eddying within its vast circumference,
On Sarum's naked plain—than pyramid
Of Egypt, unsubverted, undissolved—
Or Syria's marble ruins towering high

Above the sandy desert, in the light
Of sun or moon.—Forgive me, if I say
That an appearance which hath raised
your minds

To an exalted pitch (the self-same cause
Different effect producing) I have

• Fraught rather with depression than
delight,

Though strange it were, could I not look
around,

By the reflection of your pleasure,
pleased.

Yet happier in my judgment, even than
you

With your bright transports fairly may
be deemed,

The wandering Herbalist,—who, clear
alike?

From vain, and what worse evil, vexing
thoughts,

Cast, if he ever chance to enter here,
Upon these uncouth Forms a slight re-
gard

Of transitory interest, and peeps round
For some rare floweret of the hills, or
plant

Of craggy fountain; what he hopes for
wins,

Or learns, at least, that 'tis not to be
won:

Then, keen and eager, as a fine-nosed
hound

By soul-engrossing instinct driven along
Through wood or open field, the hairless
Man

Departs, intent upon his onward quest!—
Nor is that Fellow-wanderer, so deem I,
Less to be envied (you may trace him oft
By scars which his activity has left
Beside our roads and pathways, though,
thank Heaven!

This covert nook reports not of his hand,
He who with pocket-hammer smites the
edge

Of luckless rock or prominent stone, dis-
guised

In weather-stains or crusted o'er by Na-
ture

With her first growths, detaching by the
stroke

A chip or splinter—to resolve his doubts;
And, with that ready answer satisfied,

The substance classes by some barbar-
ous name,

And hurries on: or from the fragments
picks

His specimen, if but haply interveined
With sparkling mineral, or should crystal
cube

Lure in its cells—and thinks himself
enriched.

Wealthier, and doubtless wiser, than
before!

Intrusted safely each to his pursuit,
Earnest alike, let both from hill to hill
Range: if it please them, speed from
clime to clime;

The mind is full—and free from pain
their pastime."

"Then," said I, interposing, "One is
near,

Who cannot but possess in your esteem
Place worthier still of envy. May I
name,

Without offence, that fair-faced cottage-
boy?

Dame Nature's pupil of the lowest form,
Youngest apprentice in the school of art!

Him, as we entered from the open glen,
You might have noticed, busily engaged,
Heart, soul, and hands,—in mending the
defects

Left in the fabric of a leaky dam
Raised for enabling this penurious stream
To turn a slender mill (that new-made
plaything)

For his delight—the happiest he of all!"

"Far happiest," answered the despond-
ing Man,

"If, such as now he is, he might remain!
Ah! what avails imagination high

Or question deep? what profits all that
earth,

Or heaven's blue vault, is suffered to put
forth

Of impulse or allurements, for the Soul
To quit the beaten track of life, and soar
Far as she finds a yielding element

In past or future; far as she can go
Through time or space—if neither in the
one,

Nor in the other region, nor in aught
That Fancy, dreaming o'er the map of
things,

Hath placed beyond these penetrable
bounds,

Words of assurance can be heard; if
nowhere

A habitation, for consummate good,
Or for progressive virtue, by the search
Can be attained,—a better sanctuary

From doubt and sorrow, than the sense-
less grave?"

"Is this," the grey-haired Wanderer mildly said,
"The voice, which we so lately overheard,

To that same child, addressing tenderly
The consolations of a hopeful mind?

"His body is at rest; his soul in heaven."
These were your words; and, verily methinks

Wisdom is oft-times nearer when we stoop
Than when we soar."

The Other, not displeased,
Promptly replied—"My notion is the same.

And I, without reluctance, could decline
All act of inquisition whence we rise,
And what, when breath hath ceased, we may become.

Here are we, in a bright and breathing world.

Our origin, what matters it? In lack
Of worthier explanation, say at once
With the American (a thought which suits

The place where now we stand) that certain men

Leapt out together from a rocky cave;
And these were the first parents of mankind.

Or, if a different image be recalled
By the warm sunshine, and the jocund voice

Of insects chirping out their careless lives
On these soft beds of thyme-besprinkled turf,

Choose, with the gay Athenian, a conceit
As sound-blied race! whose mantles were bedecked

With golden grasshoppers, in sign that they

Had sprung, like those bright creatures, from the soil

Whercon their endless generations dwell.

But stop!—these theoretic faucies jar
On serious minds: then, as the Hindoos draw

Their holy Ganges from a skiey fount,
Even so deduce the stream of human life
From seats of power divine; and hope, or trust,

That our existence winds her stately course

Beneath the sun, like Ganges, to make part

Of a living ocean; or, to sink engulfed,
Like Niger, in impenetrable sands

And utter darkness: thought which may be faced,

Though comfortless!—

Not of myself I speak;
Such acquiescence neither doth imply,

In me, a meekly-bending spirit soothed
By natural piety: nor a lofty mind,
By philosophic discipline prepared
For calm subjection to acknowledged law;

Pleased to have been, contented not to be.
Such palms I boast not:—no! to me, who find,

Reviewing my past way, much to condemn.

Little to praise, and nothing to regret,
(Save some remembrances of dream-like joys

That scarcely seem to have belonged to me)

If I must take my choice between the pair
That rule alternately the weary hours,
Night is than day more acceptable; sleep
Doth, in my estimate of good, appear
A better state than waking; death than sleep;

Feelingly sweet is stillness after storm,
Though under covert of the wormy ground!

Yet be it said, in justice to myself,
That in more genial times, when I was free

To explore the destiny of human kind
(Not as an intellectual game pursued
With curious subtilty, from wish to cheat
Irk some sensations; but by love of truth
Urged on, or haply by intense delight
In feeding thought, wherever thought could feed)

I did not rank with those (too dull or nice,
For to my judgment such they then appeared,

Or too aspiring, thankless at the best)
Who, in this frame of human life, perceive

An object whereunto their souls are tied
In discontented wedlock, nor did e'er,
From me, those dark impervious shades, that hang

Upon the region whither we are bound,
Exclude a power to enjoy the vital beams
Of present sunshine.—Deities that float
On wings, angelic Spirits! I could muse
O'er what from eldest time we have been told

Of your bright forms and glorious faculties.

And with the imagination rest content,
Not wishing more; repining not to tread
The little sinuous path of earthly care,
By flowers embellished, and by springs refreshed.

—'Blow winds of autumn!—let your chilling breath

'Take the live herbage from the mead,
and strip

'The shady forest of its green attire,—

And let the bursting clouds to fury rouse
The gentle brooks!—Your desolating
sway,

Sheds, I exclaimed, 'no sadness upon
me.

And no disorder in your rage I find.
What dignity, what beauty, in this
change

From mild to angry, and from sad to
gay.

Alternate and revolving! How benign,
How rich in animation and delight,

How bountiful these elements—com-
pared

With aught, as more desirable and fair,
Devised by fancy for the golden age;

Or the perpetual warbling that prevails
In Arcady, beneath unshaken skies.

Through the long year in constant quiet
bound.

Night flushed as night, and day serene as
day!

—But why this tedious record?—Age,
we know,

Is garrulous? and solitude is apt
To anticipate the privilege of Age.

From far ye come; and surely with a
hope

Of better entertainment:—let us hence!"

Loth to forsake the spot, and still more
loth

To be diverted from our present theme,
I said, "My thoughts, agreeing, Sir, with
yours,

Would push this censure farther:—for,
if smiles

Of scornful pity be the just reward
Of Poesy thus courteously employed

In framing models to improve the scheme
Of Man's existence, and recast the world,

Why should not grave Philosophy be
styled,

Herself, a dreamer of a kindred stock.
A dreamer yet more spiritless and dull?

Yes, shall the fine immunities she boasts
Establish sounder titles of esteem

For her, who (all too timid and reserved
For onset, for resistance too inert,

Too weak for suffering, and for hope too
tame)

Placed, among flowery gardens curtained
round

With world-excluding groves, the brother-
hood

Of soft Epicureans, taught—if they
The ends of being would secure, and win

The crown of wisdom—to yield up their
souls

To a voluptuous unconcern, preferring
Tranquillity to all things. Or is she,

I cried, "more worthy of regard, the
Power,

W.P.

Who, for the sake of sterner quiet, closed
The Stoic's heart against the vain ap-
proach

Of admiration, and all sense of joy?"

His countenance gave notice that my
zeal

Accorded little with his present mind;
I ceased, and he resumed.—"Ah! gentle

Sir,

Slight, if you will, the means; but spare
to slight

The end of those who did, by system,
rank,

As the prime object of a wise man's aim,
Security from shock of accident,

Release from fear; and cherished peace-
ful days

For their own sakes, as mortal life's chief
good,

And only reasonable felicity.
What motive drew, what impulse, I

would ask.
Through a long course of later ages,

drove,
The hermit to his cell in forest wide;

Or what detained him, till his closing
eyes

Took their last farewell of the sun and
stars,

Fast anchored in the desert?—Not alone
Dread of the persecuting sword, remorse,

Wrongs unredressed, or insults unavenged
And unavengeable, defeated pride,

Prosperity subverted, maddening want,
Friendship betrayed, affection unre-

turned,
Love with despair, or grief in agony;—

Not always from intolerable pangs
He fled; but, compassed round by

pleasure, sighed
For independent happiness; craving

peace,
The central feeling of all happiness,

Not as a refuge from distress or pain,
A breathing-time, vacation, or a truce,

But for its absolute self; a life of peace,
Stability without regret or fear:

That hath been, is, and shall be ever-
more!—

Such the reward he sought; and wore
out life,

There, where on few external things his
heart

Was set, and those his own: or, if not
his,

Subsisting under nature's steadfast law.

What other yearning was the master
tie

Of the monastic brotherhood, upon rock
Aërial, or in green secluded vale,

One after one, collected from afar,

An undissolving fellowship?—What but this,

The universal instinct of repose,
The longing for confirmed tranquillity,
Inward and outward; humble, yet sublime:

The life where hope and memory are as one;

Where earth is quiet and her face, unchanged

Save by the simplest toil of human hands
Or seasons' difference; the immortal Soul,
Consistent in self-rule; and heaven revealed

To meditation in that quietness!—
Such was their scheme: and though the wished for end

By multitudes was missed, perhaps attained

By none, they for the attempt, and pains employed,

Do, in my present censure, stand redeemed

From the unqualified disdain, that once
Would have been cast upon them by my voice

Delivering her decisions from the seat
Of forward youth—that scruples not to solve

Doubts, and determine questions, by the rules

Of inexperienced judgment, ever prone
To overweening faith; and is inflamed,
By courage, to demand from real life
The test of act and suffering, to provoke
Hostility—how dreadful when it comes,
Whether affliction be the foe, or guilt!

A child of earth, I rested, in that stage
Of my past course to which these thoughts advert,

Upon earth's native energies; forgetting
That mine was a condition which required

Nor energy, nor fortitude—a calm
Without vicissitude; which, if the like
Had been presented to my view elsewhere,
I might have even been tempted to despise.

But no—for the serene was also bright,
Enlivened happiness with joy overflowing,
With joy, and—oh! that memory should survive

To speak the word—with rapture! Nature's boon,

Life's genuine inspiration, happiness
Above what rules can teach, or fancy feign;

Abused, as all possessions are abused
That are not prized according to their worth.

And yet, what worth? what good is given to men,

More solid than the gilded clouds of heaven?

What joy more lasting than a vernal fliver?—

None! 'tis the general plaint of human kind

In solitude: and mutually addressed
From each to all, for wisdom's sake:—

• This truth
The priest announces from his holy seat—

And, crowned with garlands in the summer grove,

The poet fits it to his pensive lyre.

Yet, ere that final resting-place be gained,
Sharp contradictions may arise, by doom
Of this same life, compelling us to grieve
That the prosperities of love and joy
Should be permitted, oftentimes, to endure
So long, and be at once cast down, for ever.

Oh! tremble, ye, to whom hath been assigned

A course of days composing happy months.

And they as happy years; the present still
So like the past, and both so firm a pledge
Of a congenial future, that the wheels
Of pleasure move without the aid of hope:
For Mutability is Nature's bane;
And slighted Hope will be avenged; and, when

Ye need her favours, ye shall find her not;
But in her stead—fear—doubt—and agony!

This was the bitter language of the heart:

But, while he spake, look, gesture, tone of voice,

Though, discomposed and vehement, were such.

As skill and graceful nature might suggest
To a proficient of the tragic scene

Standing before the multitude, beset
With dark events. Desirous to divert

Or stem the current of the speaker's thoughts,

We signified a wish to leave that place
Of stillness and close privacy, a nook

That seemed for self-examination made;
Or, for confession, in the sinner's need,

Hidden from all men's view. To our attempt

We yielded not: but, pointing to a slope
Of mossy turf defended from the sun,

And on that couch inviting us to rest,
Full on that, tender-hearted Man he turned

A serious eye, and his speech thus renewed.

"You never saw, your eyes did never

look

On the bright form of Her whom once I loved :—
 Her silver voice was heard upon the earth,
 A sound unknown to you ; else, honoured Friend !
 Your heart had borne a pitiable share
 Of what I suffered, when I wept that loss,
 And suffer now, not seldom, from the thought
 That I remember, and can weep no more,—
 Stripped as I am of all the golden fruit
 Of self esteem ; and by the cutting blasts
 Of self-reproach familiarly assailed ;
 Yet would I not be of such wintry bareness
 But that some leaf of your regard should hang
 Upon my naked branches :—lively thoughts
 Give birth, full often, to unguarded words ;
 I grieve that in your presence, from my tongue
 Too much of frailty hath already dropped ;
 But that too much demands still more.
 You know, Revered Compatriot—and to you, kind Sir,
 (Not to be deemed a stranger, as you come
 Following the guidance of these welcome feet
 To our secluded vale) it may be told—
 That my demerits did not sue in vain
 To One on whose mild radiance many gazed
 With hope, and all with pleasure. This fair Bride—
 In the devotedness of youthful love,
 Preferring me to parents, and the choir
 Of gay companions, to the natal roof,
 And all known places and familiar sights
 (Resigned with sadness gently weighing down
 Her trembling expectations, but no more
 Than did to her due honour, and to me
 Yielded, that day, a confidence sublime
 In what I had to build upon)—this Bride,
 Young, modest, meek, and beautiful, I led
 To a low cottage in a sunny bay,
 Where the salt sea innocuously breaks,
 And the sea breeze as innocently breathes
 On Devon's leafy shores ;—a sheltered hold,
 In a soft clime encouraging the soil
 To a luxuriant bounty !—As our steps
 Approach the embowered abode—our chosen seat—
 See, rooted in the earth, her kindly bed,

The undangered myrtle, decked with flowers,
 Before the threshold stands to welcome us !
 While, in the flowering myrtle's neighbourhood,
 Not overlooked but courting no regard,
 Those native plants, the holly and the yew,
 Gave modest intimation to the mind
 How willingly their aid they would unite
 With the green myrtle, to endear the hours
 Of winter, and protect that pleasant place.
 —Wild were the walks upon those lonely Downs,
 Track leading into track ; how marked, how worn
 Into bright verdure, between fern and gorse,
 Winding away its never ending line
 On their smooth surface, evidence was none :
 But, there, lay open to our daily haunt,
 A range of unappropriated earth,
 Where youth's ambitious feet might move at large :
 Whence, unmolested wanderers, we beheld
 The shining giver of the day diffuse
 His brightness o'er a tract of sea and land
 Gav as our spirits, free as our desires :
 As our enjoyments, boundless.—From those heights
 We dropped, at pleasure, into sylvan combs :
 Where arbours of impenetrable shade,
 And mossy seats, detained us side by side,
 With hearts at ease, and knowledge in our hearts
 ' That all the grove and all the day was ours.'
 O happy time ! still happier was at hand ;
 For Nature called my Partner to resign
 Her share in the pure freedom of that life,
 Enjoyed by us in common.—To my hope,
 To my heart's wish, my tender Mate became
 The thankful captive of maternal bonds ;
 And those wild paths were left to me alone.
 There could I meditate on follies past ;
 And, like a weary voyager escaped
 From risk and hardship, inwardly retrace
 A course of vain delights and thoughtless guilt,

And self-indulgence—without shame pursued.

There, undisturbed, could think of and could thank

Her whose submissive spirit was to me
Rule and restraint—my guardian—shall I say

That earthly Providence, whose guiding love

Within a port of rest had lodged me safe ;
Safe from temptation, and from danger far ?

Strains followed of acknowledgment addressed

To an Authority enthroned above
The reach of sight : from whom, as from their source,

Proceed all visible ministers of good
That walk the earth—Father of heaven and earth,

Father, and king, and judge, adored and feared !

These acts of mind, and memory, and heart,

And spirit—interrupted and relieved
By observations transient as the glance
Of flying sunbeams, or to the outward form

Cleaving with power inherent and intense,

As the mute insect fixed upon the plant
On whose soft leaves it hangs, and from whose cup

It draws its nourishment imperceptibly—
Endeared my wanderings : and the mother's kiss

And infant's smile awaited my return.

In privacy we dwelt, a wedded pair,
Companions daily, often all day long ;
Not placed by fortune within easy reach
Of various intercourse, nor wishing aught
Beyond the allowance of our own fire-side,

The twain within our happy cottage born,
Innates, and heirs of our united love ;
Graced mutually by difference of sex,
And with no wider interval of time
Between their several births than served for one

To establish something of a leader's sway :

Yet left them joined by sympathy in age ;

Equals in pleasure, fellows in pursuit.
On these two pillars rested as in air
Our solitude.

It soothes me to perceive,
Your courtesy withholds not from my words

Attentive audience. But, oh ! gentle Friends,

As times of quiet and unbroken peace,

Though, for a nation, times of blessedness,

Give back faint echoes from the historian's page ;

So, in the imperfect sounds of this discourse,

Depressed I hear, how faithless is the voice

Which those most blissful days reverebrate.

What special record can, or need, be given

To rules and habits, whereby much was done,

But all within the sphere of little things :
Of humble, though, to us, important cares.

And precious interests to Smoothly did our life

Advance, swerving not from the path prescribed ;

Her annual, her diurnal, round alike
Maintained with faithful care. And you divine

The worst effects that our condition saw
If you imagine changes slowly wrought.

And in their progress unperceivable ;
Not wished for ; sometime noticed with a sigh,

(Whatever of good or lovely they might bring)

Sighs of regret, for the familiar good
And loveliness endeared which they removed.

Seven years of occupation undisturbed

Established seemingly a right to hold
That happiness ; and use and habit gave
To what an alien spirit had acquired
A patrimonial sanctity. And thus,
With thoughts and wishes bounded to this world,

I lived and breathed ; most grateful—if to enjoy

Without repining or desire for more.
For different lot, or change to higher sphere,

(Only except some impulses of pride
With no determined object, though upheld

By theories with suitable support)—
Most grateful, if in such wise to enjoy

Be proof of gratitude for what we have ;
Else, I allow, most thankless.—But, at once,

From some dark seat of fatal power was urged

A claim that shattered all.—Our blooming girl,

Caught in the grip of death, with such brief time

To struggle in as scarcely would allow

Her cheek to change its colour, was conveyed
From us to inaccessible worlds, to regions
Where height, or depth, admits not the approach
Of living man, though longing to pursue.
—With even as brief a warning—and how soon,
With what short interval of time between,
I tremble yet to think of—our last prop.
Our happy life's only remaining stay—
The brother followed; and was seen no more!

Calm as a frozen lake when ruffled winds
Blow fiercely, agitating earth and sky,
The Mother now remained: as if in her,
Who, to the lowest region of the soul,
Had been erewhile unsettled and disturbed,
This second visitation had no power
To shake: but only to bind up and seal;
And to establish thankfulness of heart
In Heaven's determinations, ever just.
The eminence whereon her spirit stood,
Mine was unable to attain. Immense
The space that severed us! But, as the sight
Communicates with heaven's ethereal orbs
Incalculably distant: so, I felt
That consolation may descend from far
(And that is intercourse, and union, too.)
While, overcome with speechless gratitude,
And, with a holier love inspired, I looked
On her—at once superior to my woes
And partner of my loss.—O heavy change!
Dimness o'er this clear luminary crept
Insensibly:—the immortal and divine
Yielded to mortal reflux; her pure glory,
As from the pinnacle of worldly state
Wretched ambition drops astounded, fell
Into a gulf obscure of silent grief,
And keen heart-anguish—of itself
ashamed,
Yet obstinately cherishing itself:
And, so consumed, she melted from my arms;
And left me, on this earth, disconsolate!
What followed cannot be reviewed in thought:
Much less, retraced in words. If she, of life
Blameless, so intimate with love and joy
And all the tender motions of the soul,
Had been supplanted, could I hope to stand—
Infirm, dependent, and now destitute?

I called on dreams and visions, to disclose
That which is veiled from waking thought; conjured
Eternity, as men constrain a ghost
To appear and answer; to the grave I spake
Imploringly:—looked up, and asked the Heavens
If Angels traversed their cerulean floors,
If fixed or wandering star could tidings yield
Of the departed spirit—what abode
It occupies—what consciousness retains
Of former loves and interests. Then my soul
Turned inward,—to examine of what stuff
Time's fetters are composed: and life was put
To inquisition, long and profitless!
By pain of heart—now checked—and now impelled—
The intellectual power, through words and things,
Went sounding on, a dim and perilous way!
And from those transports, and these toils abstruse,
Some trace am I enabled to retain
Of time, else lost:—existing unto me
Only by records in myself not found.

From that abstraction I was roused,—and how?
Even as a thoughtful shepherd by a flash
Of lightning startled in a gloomy cave
Of these wild hills. For, lo! the dread Bastile,
With all the chambers in its horrid towers,
Fell to the ground:—by violence overthrown
Of indignation: and with shouts that drowned
The crash it made in falling! From the wreck
A golden palace rose, or seemed to rise,
The appointed seat of equitable law
And mild paternal sway. The potent shock
I felt: the transformation I perceived,
As marvellously seized as in that moment
When, from the blind mist issuing, I beheld
Glory—beyond all glory ever seen,
Confusion infinite of heaven and earth,
Dazzling the soul. Meanwhile, prophetic harps
In every grove were ringing, 'War shall cease:

'Did ye not hear that conquest is abjured ?

'Bring garlands, bring forth choicest flowers, to deck

'The tree of Liberty.'—My heart rebounded ;

My melancholy voice, the chorus joined ;
—'Be joyful all ye nations ; in all lands,

'Ye that are capable of joy be glad !

'Henceforth, whate'er is wanting to yourselves

'In others ye shall promptly find ;—and all,

'Enriched by mutual and reflected wealth,

'Shall with one heart honour their common kind.'

Thus was I reconverted to the world :
Society became my glittering bride,
And airy hopes my children.—From the depths

Of natural passion, seemingly escaped,
My soul diffused herself in wide embrace

Of institutions, and the forms of things :
As they exist, in mutable array,

Upon life's surface. What, though in my veins

There flowed no Gallic blood, nor had I breathed

The air of France, not less than Gallic zeal

Kindled and burnt among the sapless twigs

Of my exhausted heart. If busy men
In sober conclave met, to weave a web

Of amity, whose living threads should stretch

Beyond the seas, and to the farthest pole,
There did I sit, assisting. If, with noise

And acclamation, crowds in open air
Expressed the tumult of their minds, my voice

There mingled, heard or not. The powers of song

I left not uninvoked ; and, in still groves,
Where mild enthusiasts tuned a pensive lay

Of thanks and expectation, in accord
With their belief, I sang Saturnian rule

Returned,—a progeny of golden years
Permitted to descend, and bless mankind.

—With promises the Hebrew Scriptures
teem :

I felt their invitation ; and resumed
A long-suspended office in the House

Of public worship, where, the glowing phrase

Of ancient inspiration serving me,
I promised also,—with undaunted trust

Foretold, and added prayer to prophecy ;
The admiration winning of the crowd ;

The help desiring of the pure devout.

Scorn and contempt forbid me to proceed !

But History, time's slavish scribe, will tell

How rapidly the zealots of the cause
Disbanded—or in hostile ranks ap-

peared ;
Some, tired of honest service ; these, out-

done,
Disgusted therefore, or appalled, by aims

Of fiercer zealots—so confusion reigned,
And the more faithful were compelled to

exclaim,
As Brutus did to Virtue, 'Liberty,

'I worshipped thee, and find thee but a
"Shade !

Such recantation had for me no charm,

Nor would I bend to it ; who should have
grieved

At aught, however fair, that bore the
mien

Of a conclusion, or catastrophe.
Why then conceal, that, when the simply

good
In timid selfishness withdrew, I sought

Other support, not scrupulous whence it
came ;

And, by what compromise it stood, not
nice ?

Enough if notions seemed to be high-
pitched,

And qualities determined.—Among men
So charactered did I maintain a strife

Hopeless, and still more hopeless every
hour ;

But, in the process, I began to feel
That, if the emancipation of the world

Were missed, I should at least secure my
own,

And he in part compensated. For
rights,

Widely—inveterately usurped upon,
I spake with vehemence ; and promptly

seized
All that Abstraction furnished for my

needs
Or purposes ; nor scrupled to proclaim,

And propagate, by liberty of life,
Those new persuasions. Not that I re-

joiced,
Or even found pleasure, in such vagrant

course,
For its own sake ; but farthest from the

walk
Which I had trod in happiness and peace,

Was most inviting to a troubled mind ;
That, in a struggling and distempered

world,
Saw a seductive image of herself.

Yet, mark the contradictions of which
Man

Is still the sport ! Here Nature was my guide,

The Nature of the dissolute ; but thee,
O fostering Nature ! I rejected—smiled
At others' tears in pity, and in scorn
At those, which thy soft influence some-
times drew

From my unguarded heart.—The tran-
quil shores

Of Britain circumscribed me ; else, per-
haps

I might have been entangled among
deeds,

Which, now, as infamous, I should
abhor—

Despise, as senseless : for my spirit re-
lished

Strangely the exasperation of that land,
Which turned an angry beak against the
down

Of her own breast ; confounded into hope
Of disencumbering thus her fretful wings.

But all was quitted by iron bonds
Of millwheels swam. The shifting aims.

The moral interests, the creative might,
The varied functions and high attributes

Of civil action, yielded to a power
Formal, and odious, and contemptible.

—In Britain, ruled a panic dread of
change ;

The weak were praised, rewarded, and
advanced ;

And, from the impulse of a just disdain,
Once more did I retire into myself.

There feeling no contentment, I resolved
To fly, for safeguard, to some foreign

shore,
Remote from Europe ; from her blasted

hopes ;
Her fields of carnage, and polluted air.

Fresh blew the wind, when o'er the
Atlantic Main

The ship went gliding with her thought-
less crew ;

And who among them but an Exile, freed
From discontent, indifferent, pleased to

sit
Among the busily-employed, not more

With obligation charged, with service
taxed,

Than the loose pendant—to the idle wind
Upon the tall mast streaming. But, ye

Powers
Of soul and sense mysteriously allied,
O, never let the Wretched, if a choice

Be left him, trust the freight of his dis-
tress

To a long voyage on the silent deep !
For, like a plague, will memory break

out ;
And, in the blank and solitude of things,

Upon his spirit, with a fever's strength,
Will conscience prey.—Feebly must they
have felt

Who, in old time, attired with snakes and
whips

The vengeful Furies. *Beautiful* regards
Were turned on me—the face of her I

loved ;
The Wife and Mother pitifully fixing

Tender reproaches, insupportable !
Where now that boasted liberty ? No

welcome
From unknown objects I received ; and

those,
Known and familiar, which the vaulted

sky
Did, in the placid clearness of the night,

Disclose, had accusations to prefer
Against my peace. Within the cabin

stood
That volume—as a compass for the soul—

Revered among the nations. I implored
Its guidance ; but the infallible support

Of faith was wanting. Tell me, why re-
fused

To One by storms annoyed and adverse
wind ;

Perplexed with currents ; of his weakness
sick ;

Of vain endeavours tired ; and by his own,
And by his nature's, ignorance, dis-
mayed !

Long-wished-for sight, the Western
World appeared ;

And, when the ship was moored, I leaped
ashore

Indignantly—resolved to be a man,
Who, having o'er the past no power,

would live
No longer in subjection to the past,

With abject mind—from a tyrannic lord
Inviting penance, fruitlessly endured ;

So, like a fugitive, whose feet have cleared
Some boundary, which his followers may

not cross
In prosecution of their deadly chase,

Respiring I looked round.—How bright
the sun,

The breeze how soft ! Can any thing
produced

In the old World compare, thought I, for
power

And majesty with this gigantic stream,
Sprung from the desert ? And behold a

city
Fresh, youthful, and aspiring ! What

are these
To me, or I to them ? As much at least

As he desires that they should be, whom
wins

And waves have wafted to this distant
shore,

In the condition of a damaged seed,
Whose fibres cannot, if they would, take
root.

Here may I roam at large ;—my business
is,

Roaming at large, to observe, and not to
feel

And, therefore, not to act—convinced
that all

Which bears the name of action, how-
soever

Beginning, ends in servitude—still pain-
ful,

And mostly profitless. And, sooth to
say,

On nearer view, a motley spectacle
Appeared, of high pretensions—unre-
proved

But by the obstreperous voice of higher
still ;

Big passions strutting on a petty stage ;
Which a detached spectator may regard
Not unamused.—But ridicule demands
Quick change of objects ; and, to laugh
alone,

At a composing distance from the haunts
Of strife and folly, though it be a treat
As choice as musing Leisure can bestow ;
Yet, in the very centre of the crowd,
To keep the secret of a poignant scorn,
Howe'er to airy Demons suitable,
Of all unsocial courses, is least fit
For the gross spirit of mankind,—the one
That soonest fails to please, and quick-
liest turns

Into vexation.

Let us, then, I said,
Leave this unknit Republic to the
scourge

Of her own passions ; and to regions
haste,

Whose shades have never felt the en-
croaching axe,

Or soil endured a transfer in the mart
Of dire rapacity. There, Man abides,
Primeval Nature's child. A creature
weak

In combination, (wherefore else driven
back

So far, and of his old inheritance
So easily deprived ?) but, for that cause,
More dignified, and stronger in himself ;
Whether to act, judge, suffer, or enjoy.
True, the intelligence of social art
Hath overpowered his forefathers, and
soon

Will sweep the remnant of his line away ;
But contemplations, worthier, nobler far
Than her destructive energies, attend
His independence, when along the side
Of Mississippi, or that northern stream
That spreads into successive seas, he
walks ;

Pleased to perceive his own unshackled
life,

And his innate capacities of soul ;

There imagined : or when, having gained
the top

Of some commanding eminence, which
yet

Intruder ne'er beheld, he thence surveys
Regions of wood and wide savannah, vast

Expanse of unappropriated earth.
With mind that sheds a light on what he

sees ;
Free as the sun, and lonely as the sun.

Pouring above his head its radiance down
Upon a living and rejoicing world !

So, westward, tow'rd the unviolated
woods

I bent my way ; and, roaming far and
wide,

Failed not to greet the merry Mocking-
bird.

And, while the melancholy Muccawiss
(The sportive bird's companion in the
grove)

Repeated, o'er and o'er, his plaintive cry,
I sympathised at leisure with the sound ;

But that pure archetype of human
greatness,

I found him not. There, in his stead,
appeared

A creature, squalid, vengeful, and im-
pure ;

Remorseless, and submissive to no law
But superstitious fear, and abject sloth.

Enough is told ! Here am I—ye have
heard

What evidence I seek, and vainly seek ;
What from my fellow-beings I require,

And either they have not to give, or I
Lack virtue to receive ; what I myself,

Too oft by wilful forfeiture, have lost
Nor can regain. How languidly I look

Upon this visible fabric of the world,
May be divined—perhaps it hath been

said :—
But spare your pity, if there be in me

Aught that deserves respect : for I exist,
Within myself, not comfortless.—The

tenour
Which my life holds, he readily may con-
ceive

Howe'er hath stood to watch a mountain
brook

In some still passage of its course, and
seen,

Within the depths of its capacious breast,
Inverted trees, rocks, clouds, and azure

sky ;
And, on its glassy surface, specks of

foam,
And conglobated bubbles undissolved,

Numerous as stars; that, by their onward lapse,
 Betray to sight the motion of the stream.
 Else imperceptible. Meanwhile, is heard
 A softened roar, or murmur; and the sound
 Though soothing, and the little floating
 isles
 Though beautiful, are both by Nature
 charged
 With the same pensive office; and make
 known
 Through what perplexing labyrinths,
 abrupt

Précipitations, and untoward straits,
 The earth-born wanderer hath passed;
 and quickly,
 That respite o'er, like traverses and toils
 Must be again encounter.—Such a
 stream
 Is human Life; and so the Spirit fares
 In the best quiet to her course allowed:
 And such is mine,—save only for a
 hope
 That my particular current soon will
 reach
 The unfathomable gulf, where all is
 still!"

BOOK FOURTH

DESPONDENCY CORRECTED

ARGUMENT

State of feeling produced by the foregoing Narrative—A belief in a superintending Providence the only adequate support under affliction—Wanderer's ejaculation—Acknowledges the difficulty of a lively faith—Hence immoderate sorrow—Exhortations—How received—Wanderer applies his discourse to that other cause of dejection in the Solitary's mind—Disappointment from the French Revolution—States grounds of hope, and insists on the necessity of patience and fortitude with respect to the course of great revolutions—Knowledge the source of tranquillity—Rural Solitude favourable to knowledge of the inferior Creatures; Study of their habits and ways recommended; exhortation to bodily exertion and communion with Nature—Morbid Solitude pitiable—Superstition better than apathy—Apathy and destitution unknown in the infancy of society—The various modes of Religion prevented it—Illustrated in the Jewish, Persian, Babylonian, Chaldean, and Grecian modes of belief—Solitary interposes—Wanderer points out the influence of religious and imaginative feeling in the humble ranks of society, illustrated from present and past times—These principles tend to recal exploded superstitions and popery—Wanderer rebuts this charge, and contrasts the dignities of the Imagination with the presumptuous littleness of certain modern Philosophers—Recommends other lights and guides—Asserts the power of the Soul to regenerate herself; Solitary asks how—Reply—Personal appeal—Exhortation to activity of body renewed—How to commune with Nature—Wanderer concludes with a legitimate union of the imagination, affections, understanding, and reason—Effect of his discourse—Evening; Return to the Cottage.

HERE closed the Tenant of that lonely
 vale
 His mournful narrative—commenced in
 pain,
 In pain commenced, and ended without
 peace:

Yet tempered, not unfrequently, with
 strains
 Of native feeling, grateful to our minds;
 And yielding surely some relief to his,
 While we sat listening with compassion
 due.
 A pause of silence followed; then, with
 voice
 That did not falter though the heart was
 moved,
 The Wanderer said:—
 "One adequate support
 For the calamities of mortal life
 Exists—one only: an assured belief
 That the procession of our fate, however
 Sad or disturbed, is ordered by a Being
 Of infinite benevolence and power;
 Whose everlasting purposes embrace
 All accidents, converting them to good.
 —The darts of anguish fix not where the
 seat
 Of suffering hath been thoroughly
 fortified
 By acquiescence in the Will supreme
 For time and for eternity: by faith.
 Faith absolute in God, including hope.
 And the defence that lies in boundless
 love
 Of his perfections: with habitual dread
 Of aught unworthily conceived, endured
 Impatiently, ill-done, or left undone,
 To the dishonour of his holy name.
 Soul of our Souls, and safeguard of the
 world!
 Sustain, thou only canst, the sick of
 heart;
 Restore their languid spirits, and recal
 Their lost affections unto thee and
 thine!"

Then, as we issued from that covert
 nook,
 He thus continued, lifting up his eyes
 To heaven:—"How beautiful this dome
 of sky;

And the vast hills, in fluctuation fixed
At thy command, how awful ! Shall the
Soul,

Human and rational, report of thee
Even less than these ?—Be mute who
will, who can.

Yet I will praise thee with impassioned
voice :

My lips, that may forget thee in the
crowd.

Cannot forget thee here ; where thou
hast built.

For thy own glory, in the wilderness !

Me didst thou constitute a priest of thine,

In such a temple as we now behold

Reared for thy presence : therefor, am
I bound

To worship, here, and everywhere—as one
Not doomed to ignorance, though forced
to tread,

From childhood up, the ways of poverty,
From unreflecting ignorance preserved.
And from debasement rescued.—By thy
grace

The particle divine remained unquenched ;
And, 'mid the wild weeds of a rugged soil,
Thy bounty caused to flourish deathless
flowers.

From paradise transplanted : wintry age
Impends ; the frost will gather round my
heart ;

If the flowers wither, I am worse than
dead !

—Come, labour, when the worn-out
frame requires

Perpetual sabbath ; come, disease and
want ;

And sad exclusion through decay of
sense ;

But leave me unabated trust in thee—
And let thy favour, to the end of life,

Inspire me with ability to seek
Repose and hope among eternal things—

Father of heaven and earth ! and I am
rich,

And will possess my portion in content !

And what are things eternal ?—powers
depart,

The grey-haired Wanderer stedfastly
replied,

Answering the question which himself
had asked,

“ Possessions vanish, and opinions
change,

And passions hold a fluctuating seat :
But, by the storms of circumstance un-

shaken,
And subject neither to eclipse nor wane,
Duty exists ;—immutably survive,

For our support, the measures and the
forms,

Which an abstract intelligence supplies ;

Whose kingdom is, where time and space
are not.

Of other converse which mind, soul, and
heart,

Do, with united urgency, require.

What more that may not perish ?—Thou,
dread source,

Prime, self-existing cause and end of all
That in the scale of being fill their place ;

Above our human region, or below,
Set and sustained ;—thou, who didst

wrap the cloud
Of infancy around us, that thyself,

Therein, with our simplicity awhile
Might'st hold, on earth, communion un-

disturbed :
Who from the anarchy of dreaming sleep,

Or from its death-like void, with punc-
tual care,

And touch as gentle as the morning light,
Restor'st us, daily, to the powers of sense

And reason's steadfast rule—thou, thou
alone

Art everlasting, and the blessed Spirits,
Which thou includest, as the sea her

waves :
For adoration thou endur'st ; endure

For consciousness the motions of thy
will ;

For apprehension those transcendent
truths

Of the pure intellect, that stand as laws
(Submission constituting strength and

power)
Even to thy Being's infinite majesty !

This universe shall pass away—a work
Glorious ! because the shadow of thy

might.
A step, or link, for intercourse with thee.

Ah ! if the time must come, in which my
feet

No more shall stray where meditation
leads,

By flowing stream, through wood, or
craggy wild,

Loved haunts like these ; the unimpris-
oned Mind

May yet have scope to range among her
own,

Her thoughts, her images, her high
desires.

If the dear faculty of sight should fall,
Still, it may be allowed me to remember

What visionary powers of eye and soul
In youth were mine ; when, stationed on

the top
Of some huge hill—expectant, I beheld

The sun rise up, from distant climes
returned

Darkness to chase, and sleep ; and bring
the day

His bounteous gift ! or saw him toward
the deep

Sink, with a retinue of flaming clouds
 Attended ; then, my spirit was entranced
 With joy exalted to beatitude ;
 The measure of my soul was filled with
 bliss,
 And holiest love ; as earth, sea, air, with
 light,
 With pomp, with glory, with magnifi-
 cence !

Those fervent raptures are for ever
 flown ;
 And, since their date, my soul hath under-
 gone

Change manifold, for better or for worse :
 Yet cease I not to struggle, and aspire
 Heavenward ; and chide the part of me
 that flags,

Through sinful choice ; or dread neces-
 sity

On human nature from above imposed.
 'Tis, by comparison, an easy task
 Earth to despise ; but, to converse with
 heaven—

This is not easy :—to relinquish all
 We have, or hope, of happiness and joy ;
 And stand in freedom loosened from this
 world,

I deem not arduous ; but must needs
 confess

That 'tis a thing impossible to frame
 Conceptions equal to the soul's desires :
 And the most difficult of tasks to keep
 Heights which the soul is competent to
 gain.

—Man is of dust : ethereal hopes are his,
 Which, when they should sustain them-
 selves aloft,

Want due consistence ; like a pillar of
 smoke,

That with majestic energy from earth
 Rises ; but, having reached the thinner
 air,

Melts, and dissolves, and is no longer seen.
 From this infirmity of mortal kind
 Sorrow proceeds, which else were not :
 at least,

If grief be something hallowed and or-
 dained,

If, in proportion, it be just and meet.
 Yet, through this weakness of the gen-
 eral heart,

Is it enabled to maintain its hold
 In that excess which conscience disap-
 proves.

For who could sink and settle to that
 point

Of selfishness ; so senseless who could be
 As long and perseveringly to mourn
 For any object of his love, removed
 From this unstable world, if he could fix
 A satisfying view upon that state
 Of pure, imperishable, blessedness,

Which reason promises, and holy writ
 Ensures to all believers ?—Yet mistrust
 Is of such incapacity, methinks,
 No natural branch ; despondency far
 less ;

And, least of all, is absolute despair.

—And, if there be whose tender flames
 have drooped

Even to the dust ; apparently, through
 weight

Of anguish unrelieved, and lack of power
 An agonizing sorrow to transmute ;
 Deem not that proof is here of hope with-
 held

When wanted most ; a confidence im-
 paired

So pitifully, that, having ceased to see
 With bodily eyes, they are borne down
 by love

Of what is lost, and perish through regret.

Oh ! no, the innocent Sufferer often sees
 Too clearly : feels too vividly ; and longs

To realize the vision, with intense
 And over-constant yearning :—there—

there lies
 The excess, by which the balance is de-
 stroyed.

Too, too contracted are these walls of
 flesh.

This vital warmth too cold, these visual
 orbs,

Though inconceivably endowed, too
 dim

For any passion of the soul that leads
 To ecstasy : and, all the crooked paths

Of time and change disdaining, takes its
 course

Along the line of limitless desires.

I, speaking now from such disorder free,
 Nor rapt, nor craving, but in settled

peace.

I cannot doubt that they whom you de-
 plore

Are glorified ; or, if they sleep, shall wake
 From sleep, and dwell with God in end-
 less love.

Hope, below this, consists not with be-
 lief

In mercy, carried infinite degrees

Beyond the tenderness of human hearts :

Hope, below this, consists not with belief

In perfect wisdom, guiding mightiest
 power,

That finds no limits but her own pure
 will.

Here then we rest : not fearing for our
 creed

The worst that human reasoning can
 achieve,

To unsettle or perplex it : yet with pain
 Acknowledging, and grievous self-re-
 proach,

That, though immovably convinced, we
want

Zeal, and the virtue to exist by faith
As soldiers live by courage; as, by
strength

Of heart, the sailor fights with roaring
sea.

Alas! the endowment of immortal power
Is matched unequally with custom, time;
And domineering faculties of sense
In all; in most with superadded foes,
Idle temptations: open vanities,
Ephemeral offspring of the unblushing
world;

And, in the private regions of the mind,
Ill-governed passions, ranklings of de-
spite,

Immoderate wishes, pining discontent,
Distress and care. What then remains?

—To seek

Those helps for his occasions ever near
Who lacks not will to use them; vows,
renewed

On the first motion of a holy thought:
Vigils of contemplation: praise: and
prayer—

A stream, which, from the fountain of
the heart

Issuing, however feebly, nowhere flows
Without access of unexpected strength.
But, above all, the victory is most sure
For him, who, seeking faith by virtue,
strives

To yield entire submission to the law
Of conscience—conscience revered
and obeyed,

As God's most intimate presence in the
soul,

And his most perfect image in the world.
—Endeavour thus to live; these rules
regard;

These helps solicit: and a steadfast seat
Shall then be yours among the happy few
Who dwell on earth, yet breathe empyreal
air,

Sons of the morning. For your nobler
part,

Ere disencumbered of her mortal chains,
Doubt shall be quelled and trouble
chased away;

With only such degree of sadness left
As may support longings of pure desire;
And strengthen love, rejoicing secretly
In the sublime attractions of the grave.”

While, in this strain, the venerable
Sage

Poured forth his aspirations, and an-
nounced

His judgments, near that lonely house
we paced

A plot of green-sward, seemingly pre-
served

By nature's care from wreck of scattered
stones,

And from encroachment of encircling
heath:

Small space! But, for reiterated steps,
Smooth and commodious; as a stately
deck

Which to and fro the mariner is used
To tread for pastime, talking with his
mates,

Or haply thinking of far-distant friends,
While the ship glides before a steady
breeze.

Stillness prevailed around us: and the
voice

That spake was capable to lift the soul
Toward regions yet more tranquil: But,

methought,

That he, whose fixed despondency had
given

Impulse and motive to that strong dis-
course,

Was less upraised in spirit than abashed;
Shrinking from admonition, like a man
Who feels that to exhort is to reproach.
Yet not to be diverted from his aim.

The Sage continued:—

“For that other loss,
The loss of confidence in social man,

By the unexpected transports of our
age

Carried so high, that every thought,
which looked

Beyond the temporal destiny of the Kind,
To many seemed superfluous—as, no
cause

Could e'er for such exalted confidence
Exist; so, none is now for fixed despair:

The two extremes are equally disowned
By reason: if, with sharp recoil, from
one

You have been driven far as its opposite,
Between them seek the point whereon
to build

Sound expectations. So doth he advise
Who shared at first the illusion; but was
soon

Cast from the pedestal of pride by shocks
Which Nature gently gave, in woods and
fields;

Nor unapproved by Providence, thus
speaking

To the inattentive children of the world:
Vain-glorious Generation! what new
powers

‘On you have been conferred? what gifts,
withheld

‘From your progenitors, have ye re-
ceived,

‘Fit recompense of new desert? what
claim

‘Are ye prepared to urge, that my de-
crees

'For you should undergo a sudden change;
'And the weak functions of one busy day,
'Reclaiming and extirpating, perform
'What all the slowly-moving years of time,
'With their united force, have left undone?
'By nature's gradual processes be taught:
'By story be confounded! Ye aspire
'Rashly, to fall once more; and that false fruit,
'Which, to your over-weening spirits, yields
'Hope of a flight celestial, will produce
'Misery and shame. But Wisdom, of her sons
'Shall not, the less, though late, be justified.'

Such timely warning," said the Wanderer, "gave
That visionary voice: and, at this day,
When a Tartarian darkness overspreads
The groaning nations; when the unpi-
ous rule,
By will or by established ordinance,
Their own dire agents, and constrain the good
To acts which they abhor: though I be-
wail
This triumph, yet the pity of my heart
Prevents me not from owning, that the law,
By which mankind now suffers, is most
just.
'For by superior energies: more strict
Affiance in each other; faith more firm
In their unhallowed principles: the bad
Have fairly earned a victory o'er the weak,
The vacillating inconsistent good.
Therefore, not uncounselled, I wait—in hope
'To see the moment, when the righteous cause
Shall gain defenders zealous and devout
As they who have opposed her; in which
Virtue
Will, to her efforts, tolerate no bounds
That are not lofty as her rights: aspiring
By impulse of her own ethereal zeal.
That spirit only can redeem mankind:
And when that sacred spirit shall appear,
Then shall our triumph be complete as theirs.
Yet, should this confidence prove vain,
the wise
Have still the keeping of their proper peace;
Are guardians of their own tranquillity.
They act, or they recede, observe, and
feel:

'Knowing the heart of man is set to be
The centre of this world, about the which
Those revolutions of disturbances
Still roll: where all the aspects of misery
Predominate: whose strong effects are
such
As he must bear, being powerless to re-
dress;
*And that unless above himself he can
Erect himself, how poor a thing is Man!*'

Happy is he who lives to understand,
Not human nature only, but explores
All natures,—to the end that he may find
The law that governs each: and where
begins
The union, the partition where, that makes
Kind and degree, among all visible
Beings:
The constitution, power, and faculties,
Which they inherit, cannot step be-
yond,—
And cannot fall beneath: that do assign
To every class its station and its office,
Through all the mighty commonwealth of things:
Up from the creeping plant to sovereign
Man.
Such converse, it directed by a meek,
Sincere, and humble spirit, teaches love:
For knowledge is delight; and such de-
light
Breeds love: yet, suited as it rather is
To thought and to the climbing intellect,
It teaches less to love, than to adore;
If that be not indeed the highest love!
"Yet," said I, tempted here to inter-
pose,
"The dignity of life is not impaired
By aught that innocently satisfies
The humbler cravings of the heart: and
he
Is a still happier man, who, for those
heights
Of speculation not unfit, descends:
And such benign affections cultivates
Among the inferior kinds; not merely
those
That he may call his own, and which
depend,
As individual objects of regard.
Upon his care, from whom he also looks
For signs and tokens of a mutual bond;
But others, far beyond this narrow sphere,
Whom, for the very sake of love, he loves.
Nor is it a mean praise of rural life
And solitude, that they do favour most,
Most frequently call forth, and best
sustain,

These pure sensations ; that can pene-
trate
The obstreperous city ; on the barren
seas
Are not unfelt ; and much might recom-
mend,
How much they might inspirit and
endear,
The loneliness of this sublime retreat !

"Yes," said the Sage, resuming the
discourse
Again directed to his downcast Friend,
"If, with the froward will and grovelling
soul
Of man, offended, liberty is here,
And invitation every hour renewed,
To mark their placid state, who never
heard
Of a command which they have power to
break,
Or rule which they are tempted to trans-
gress ;
These, with a soothed or elevated heart,
Lay we behold ; their knowledge regis-
ter ;
Observe their ways : and, free from envy,
find
Complacence there :—but wherefore this
to you ?
I guess that, welcome to your lonely
hearth,
The redbreast, ruffled up by winter's cold
Into a 'feathery bunch,' feeds at your
hand :
A box, perchance, is from your casement
hung
For the small wren to build in :—not in
vain,
The barriers disregarding that surround
This deep abiding place, before your
sight
Mounts on the breeze the butterfly ; and
soars,
Small creature as she is, from earth's
bright flowers,
Into the dewy clouds. Ambition reigns
In the waste wilderness : the Soul ascends
Drawn towards her native firmament of
heaven,
When the fresh eagle, in the month of
May,
Upborne, at evening, on replenished
wing,
This shaded valley leaves ; and leaves
the dark
Empurpled hills, conspicuously renewing
A proud communication with the sun
Low sunk beneath the horizon !—List !
—I heard,
From yon huge breast of rock, a voice
sent forth
As if the visible mountain made the cry.

Again !"—The effect upon the soul was
such
As he expressed : from out the moun-
tain's heart
The solemn voice appeared to issue, start-
ling
The blank air—for the region all around
Stood empty of all shape of life, and
silent
Save for that single cry, the unanswer'd
bleat
Of a poor lamb—left somewhere to itself,
The plaintive spirit of the solitude !
He paused, as if unwilling to proceed,
Through consciousness that silence in
such place
Was best, the most affecting eloquence.
But soon his thoughts returned upon
themselves,
And, in soft tone of speech, thus he
resumed.

"Ah ! if the heart, too confidently
raised,
Perchance too lightly occupied, or lulled
Too easily, despise or overlook
The vassalage that binds her to the earth,
Her sad dependence upon time and all
The trepidations of mortality,
What place so destitute and void—but
there
The little flower her vanity shall check ;
The trailing worm reprove her thought-
less pride ?

These craggy regions, these chaotic
wilds,
Does that benignity pervade, that warms
The mole contented with her darksome
walk
In the cold ground ; and to the emmet
gives
Her foresight, and intelligence that makes
The tiny creatures strong by social
league ;
Supports the generations, multiplies
Their tribes, till we behold a spacious
plain
Or grassy bottom, all, with little hills—
Their labour, covered, as a lake with
waves ;
Thousands of cities, in the desert place
Built up of life, and food, and means of
life !
Nor wanting here, to entertain the
thought,
Creatures that in communities exist,
Less, as might seem, for general guar-
dianship
Or through dependence upon mutual aid,
Than by participation of delight
And a strict love of fellowship, combined.
What other spirit can it be that prompts

The gilded summer flies to mix and weave
 Their sports together in the solar beam,
 Or in the gloom of twilight hum their joy?
 More obviously the self-same influence
 rules
 The feathered kinds; the seldfare's
 pensive flock,
 The cawing rooks, and sea-mews from
 afar,
 Hovering above these inland solitudes,
 By the rough wind unscattered, at whose
 call
 'Up through the trenches of the long-
 drawn vales
 Their voyage was begun: nor is its power
 Unfelt among the sedentary fowl
 That seek yon pool, and there prolong
 their stay
 In silent congress; or together roused
 Take flight; while with their clang the
 air resounds.
 And, over all, in that ethereal vault,
 Is the mute company of changeable clouds;
 Bright apparitions, suddenly put forth,
 The rainbow smiling on the faded storm;
 The mild assemblage of the starry
 heavens;
 And the great sun, earth's universal lord!

How bountiful is Nature! he shall find
 Who seeks not, and to him, who hath
 not asked,
 Large measure shall be dealt. Three
 sabbath-days
 Are scarcely told, since, on a service bent
 Of mere humanity, you climb those
 heights;
 And what a marvellous and heavenly
 show
 Was suddenly revealed!—the swains
 moved on,
 And heeded not: you lingered, you per-
 ceived
 And felt, deeply as living man could feel.
 There is a luxury in self-dispraise:
 And inward self-disparagement affords
 To meditative spleen a grateful feast.
 Trust me, pronouncing on your own
 desert,
 You judge unthankfully: distempered
 nerves
 Infect the thoughts: the languor of the
 frame
 Depresses the soul's vigour. Quit your
 couch—
 Cleave not so fondly to your moody cell;
 Nor let the hallowed powers, that shed
 from heaven
 Stillness and rest, with disapproving eye
 Look down upon your taper, through a
 watch
 Of midnight hours, unseasonably twink-
 ling

In this deep Hollow, like a sullen star
 Dimly reflected in a lonely pool.
 Take courage, and withdraw yourself
 from ways
 That run not parallel to nature's course.
 Rise with the lark! your matins shall
 obtain
 Grace, be their composition what it may,
 If but with hers performed; climb once
 again,
 Climb every day, those ramparts; meet
 the breeze
 Upon their tops, adventurous as a bee
 That from your garden thither soars, to
 feed
 On new-blown heath; let yon command-
 ing rock
 Be your frequented watch-tower; roll
 the stone
 In thunder down the mountains; with
 all your might
 Chase the wild goat; and if the bold red
 deer
 Fly to those harbours, driven by hound
 and horn
 Load echoing, add your speed to the pur-
 suit;
 So, wearied to your hut shall you return,
 And sink at evening into sound repose."

The Solitary lifted toward the hills
 A kindling eye:—accordant feelings
 rushed
 Into his bosom, whence these words
 broke forth:
 "Oh! what a joy it were, in vigorous
 health,
 To have a body (this our vital frame
 With shrinking sensibility endued,
 And all the nice regards of flesh and blood)
 And to the elements surrender it
 As if it were a spirit!—How divine,
 The liberty, for frail, for mortal, man
 To roam at large among unpeopled glens
 And mountainous retirements, only trod
 By devious footsteps; regions consecrate
 To oldest time! and, reckless of the storm
 That keeps the raven quiet in her nest,
 Be as a presence or a motion—one
 Among the many there; and while the
 mists
 Flying, and rainy vapours, call out shapes
 And phantoms from the crags and solid
 earth
 As fast as a musician scatters sounds
 Out of an instrument; and while the
 streams
 (As at a first creation and in haste
 To exercise their untried faculties)
 Descending from the region of the clouds,
 And starting from the hollows of the
 earth
 More multitudinous every moment, rend

Their way before them—what a joy to
roam

An equal among mightiest energies ;

And haply sometimes with articulate
voice,

Amid the deafening tumult, scarcely
heard

By him that utters it, exclaim aloud,

'Rage on ye elements ! let moon and
stars

Their aspects lend, and mingle in their
turn

With this commotion (ruminous though it
be)

From day to night, from night to day,
prolonged !

"Yes," said the Wanderer, taking
from my lips

The strain of transport, "whoso'er in
youth

Has, through ambition of his soul, given
way

To such desires, and grasped at such
delight,

Shall feel congenial stirrings late and
long,

In spite of all the weakness that life
brings,

Its cares and sorrows ; he, though taught
to own

The tranquillizing power of time, shall
wake,

Wake sometimes to a noble restlessness—
Loving the sports which once he gloried
in.

Compatriot, Friend, remote are Garry's
hills,

The streams far distant of your native
glen ;

Yet is their form and image here ex-
pressed

With brotherly resemblance. Turn your
steps

Wherever fancy leads ; by day, by night,
Are various engines working, not the same

As those with which your soul in youth
was moved,

But by the great Artificer endowed
With no inferior power. You dwell
alone ;

You walk, you live, you speculate alone ;
Yet doth remembrance, like a sovereign
prince,

For you a stately gallery maintain
Of gay or tragic pictures. You have seen,

Have acted, suffered, travelled far,
observed

With no incurious eye ; and books are
yours,

Within whose silent chambers treasure
lies

Preserved from age to age ; more pre-
cious far

Than that accumulated store of gold

And orient gems, which, for a day of need,
The Sultan hides deep in ancestral tombs.

These hoards of truth you can unlock at
will :

And music waits upon your skilful touch,
Sounds which the wandering shepherd

from these heights
Hears, and forgets his purpose ;—fur-

nished thus,
How can you droop, if willing to be up-

raised ?

A piteous lot it were to flee from Man—
Yet not rejoice in Nature. He, whose

hours
Are by domestic pleasures uncaressed

And unenlivened : who exists whole years
Apart from benefits received or done

'Mid the transactions of the bustling
crowd ;

Who neither hears, nor feels a wish to
hear,

Of the world's interests—such a one hath
need

Of a quick fancy, and an active heart,
That, for the day's consumption, books

may yield
Food not unwholesome, earth and air

correct
His morbid humour, with delight sup-
plied

Or solace, varying as the seasons change.
—Truth has her pleasure-grounds, her

haunts of ease
And easy contemplation ; gay parterres,

And labyrinthine walks, her sunny
glades

And shady groves in studied contrast—
each,

For recreation, leading into each :
These may he range, if willing to partake

Their soft indulgences, and in due time
May issue thence, recruited for the tasks

And course of service Truth requires
from those

Who tend her altars, wait upon her
throne,

And guard her fortresses. Who thinks,
and feels,

And recognises ever and anon
"The breeze of nature stirring in his soul,"

Why need such man go desparately
astray,

And nurse 'the dreadful appetite of
death ?'

If tired with systems, each in its degree
Substantial, and all crumbling in their

turn,
Let him build systems of his own, and
smile

At the fond work, demolished with a touch ;
If unreligious, let him be at once
Among ten thousand innocents, enrolled
A pupil in the many-chambered school,
Where superstition weaves her airy dreams.

Life's autumn past, I stand on winter's verge ;
And daily lose what I desire to keep :
Yet rather would I instantly decline
To the traditiohary sympathies
Of a most rustic ignorance, and take
A fearful apprehension from the owl
Or death-watch : and as readily rejoice,
If two auspicious magpies crossed my way ;—

To this would rather bend than see and hear

The repetitions wearisome of sense,
Where soul is dead, and feeling hath no place ;
Where knowledge, all begun in cold remark
On outward things, with formal inference ends ;

Or, if the mind turns inward, she recoils
At once—or, not recoiling, is perplexed—
Lost in a gloom of uninspired research ;
Meanwhile, the heart within the heart,
the seat

Where peace and happy consciousness
should dwell,

On its own axis restlessly revolving,
Seeks, yet can nowhere find, the light of truth.

Upon the breast of new-created earth
Man walked ; and when and wheresoe'er
he moved,

Alone or mated, solitude was not.
He heard, borne on the wind, the articulate voice

Of God ; and Angels to his sight appeared
Crowning the glorious hills of paradise ;
Or through the groves gliding like morning mist

Enkindled by the sun. He sate—and talked

With winged Messengers : who daily brought

To his small island in the ethereal deep
Tidings of joy and love.—From those pure heights

(Whether of actual vision, sensible
To sight and feeling, or that in this sort
Have condescendingly been shadowed forth

Communications spiritually maintained,
And intuitions moral and divine)

Fell Human-kind—to banishment condemned

W.P.

That flowing years repealed not and distress

And grief spread wide ; but Man escaped the doom

Of destitution ;—solitude was not.

—Jehovah—shapeless Power above all Powers,

Single and one, the omnipresent God,
By vocal utterance, or blaze of light,

Or cloud of darkness, localised in heaven ;
On earth, enshrined within the wandering ark ;

Or, out of Sion, thundering from his throne

Between the Cherubim—on the chosen Race

Showered miracles, and ceased not to dispense

Judgments, that filled the land from age to age

With hope, and love, and gratitude, and fear ;

And with amazement smote ;—thereby to assert

His scorned, or unacknowledged, sovereignty.

And when the One, ineffable of name,
Of nature indivisible, withdrew

From mortal adoration or regard,
Not then was Deity engulfed ; nor Man,

The rational creature, left, to feel the weight

Of his own reason, without sense or thought

(Of higher reason and a purer will,
To benefit and bless, through mightier power :—

Whether the Persian—zealous to reject
Altar and image, and the inclusive walls

And roofs of temples built by human hands—

To loftiest heights ascending, from their tops,

With myrtle-wreathed tiara on his brow,
Presented sacrifice to moon and stars,

And to the winds and mother elements,
And the whole circle of the heavens, for him

A sensitive existence, and a God,

With lifted hands invoked, and songs of praise :

Or, less reluctantly to bonds of sense
Yielding his soul, the Babylonian framed

For influence undefined a personal shape ;
And, from the plain, with toil immense,

upreared
Tower eight times planted on the top of tower,

That Belus, nightly to his splendid couch
Descending, there might rest ; upon that height

Pure and serene, diffused—to overlook
Winding Euphrates, and the city vast

R R

Of his devoted worshippers, far-stretched,
With grove and field and garden inter-
spersed;
Their town, and foodful region for sup-
port
Against the pressure of beleaguering war.

Chaldean Shepherds, ranging trackless
fields,
Beneath the concave of unclouded skies
Spread like a sea, in boundless solitude,
Looked on the polar star, as on a guide
And guardian of their course, that never
closed

His steadfast eye. The planetary Five
With a submissive reverence they be-
held;

Watched, from the centre of their sleep-
ing flocks,

Those radiant Mercuries, that seemed to
move

Carrying through ether, in perpetual
round,

Decrees and resolutions of the Gods;
And, by their aspects, signifying works
Of dim futurity, to Man revealed.

—The imaginative faculty was lord
Of observations natural; and, thus
Led on, those shepherds made report of
stars

In set rotation passing to and fro,
Between the orbs of our apparent sphere
And its invisible counterpart, adorned
With answering constellations, under
earth,

Removed from all approach of living
sight

But present to the dead; who, so they
deemed,

Like those celestial messengers beheld
All accidents, and judges were of all.

The lively Grecian, in a land of hills,
Rivers and fertile plains, and sounding
shores,—

Under a cope of sky more variable,
Could find commodious place for every
God,

Promptly received, as prodigally brought,
From the surrounding countries, at the
choice

Of all adventurers. With unrivalled
skill,

As nicest observation furnished hints
For studious fancy, his quick hand be-
stowed

On fluent operations a fixed shape;
Metal or stone, idolatrously served.

And yet—triumphant o'er this pompous
show

With his palpable array of sense,
lies side encountered; in despite
fictions chanted in the streets

By wandering Rhapsodists; and in con-
tempt

Of doubt and bold denial hourly urged
Amid the wrangling schools—a SPIRIT
hung,

Beautiful region! o'er thy towns and
farms,

Statues and temples, and memorial tombs;
And emanations were perceived; and
acts

Of immortality, in Nature's course,
Exemplified by mysteries, that were felt

As bonds, on grave philosopher imposed
And armed warrior; and in every grove

A gay or pensive tenderness prevailed,
When piety more awful had relaxed.

—Take, running river, take these locks
of mine—

Thus would the Votary say—this
severed hair,

My vow fulfilling, do I here present,
Thankful for my beloved child's return.

Thy banks, Cephissus, he again hath trod,
Thy murmurs heard; and drunk the

crystal lymph
With which thou dost refresh the thirsty

lip,
And, all day long, moisten these flowery

fields!

And doubtless, sometimes, when the
hair was shed

Upon the flowing stream, a thought
arose

Of Life continuous, Being unimpaired;
That hath been, is, and where it was and

is
There shall endure,—existence unexposed
To the blind walk of mortal accident;

From diminution safe and weakening
age;

While man grows old, and dwindles, and
decays;

And countless generations of mankind
Depart; and leave no vestige where they

trod.

We live by Admiration, Hope, and
Love;

And, even as these are well and wisely
fixed,

In dignity of being we ascend.
But what is error?—"Answer he who

can!"

The Sceptic somewhat haughtily ex-
claimed:

"Love, Hope, and Admiration—are they
not

Mad Fancy's favourite vassals? Does
not life

Use them, full oft, as pioneers to ruin,
Guides to destruction? Is it well to

trust
Imagination's light when reason's fails,

The unguarded taper where the guarded
faints ?

—Stoop from those heights, and soberly
declare

What error is ; and, of our errors, which
Doth most debase the mind ; the genuine
seats

Of power, where are they ? Who shall
regulate,

With truth, the scale of intellectual rank ?

"Methinks," persuasively the Sage
replied.

"That for this arduous office you possess
Some rare advantages. Your early day,

A grateful recollection must supply
Of much exalted good by Heaven vouch-
safed.

To dignify the humblest state.—Your
voice

Hath, in my hearing, often testified
That poor men's children, they, and they
alone.

By their mention taught, can under-
stand

The wisdom of the prayer that daily asks
For daily bread. A consciousness is
yours

How feelingly religion may be learned
In smoky cabins, from a mother's tongue—
Heard while the dwelling vibrates to the
din

Of the contiguous torrent, gathering
strength

At every moment—and, with strength,
increase

Of fury ; or, while snow is at the door,
Assaulting and defending, and the wind,
A sightless labourer, whistles at his
work—

Fearful ; but resignation tempers fear,
And piety is sweet to infant mounds.

—The Shepherd-lad, that in the sunshine
carves,

On the green turf, a dial—to divide
The silent hours ; and who to that report
Can portion out his pleasures, and adapt.

Throughout a long and lonely summer's
day

His round of pastoral duties, is not left
With less intelligence for moral things
Of gravest import. Early he perceives,

Within himself, a measure and a rule,
Which to the sun of truth he can apply.

That shines for him, and shines for all
mankind.

Experience daily fixing his regards
On nature's wants, he knows how few
they are.

And where they lie, how answered and
appeased.

This knowledge ample recompense affords
For manifold privations ; he refers

His notions to this standard ; on this
rock

Rests his desires ; and hence, in after
life,

Soul-strengthening patience, and sub-
lime content.

Imagination—not permitted here
To waste her powers, as in the worldling's
mind.

On fickle pleasures and superfluous cares,
And trivial ostentation—is left free

And puissant to range the solemn walks
Of time and nature, girded by a zone

That, while it binds, invigorates and sup-
ports.

Acknowledge, then, that whether by the
side

Of his poor hut, or on the mountain top,
Or in the cultured field, a Man so bred

(Take from him what you will upon the
score

Of ignorance or illusion) lives and breathes
For noble purposes of mind : his heart

Beats to the heroic song of ancient days ;
His eye distinguishes, his soul creates.

And those illusions, which excite the
scorn

Or move the pity of unthinking minds,
Are they not mainly outward ministers

Of inward conscience ? with whose service
charged

They came and go, appeared and disap-
pear.

Diverting evil purposes, remorse
Awakening, chastening an intemperate
grief,

Or pride of heart abating : and, when'er
For less important ends those phantoms
move.

Who would forbid them, if their presence
serve.

On thinly-peopled mountains and wild
heaths,

Filling a space, else vacant, to exalt
The forms of Nature, and enlarge her
powers ?

Once more to distant ages of the world
Let us revert, and place before our
thoughts

The face which rural solitude might wear
To the unenlightened swains of pagan
Greece.

—In that fair clime, the lonely herdsman,
stretched

On the soft grass through half a summer's
day,

With music lulled his indolent repose :
And, in some fit of weariness, if he,

When his own breath was silent, chanced
to hear

A distant strain, far sweeter than the
sounds

Which his poor skill could make, his fancy
 fetched,
 Even from the blazing chariot of the sun,
 A beardless Youth, who touched a golden
 lute,
 And filled the illumined groves with
 ravishment.
 The nightly hunter, lifting a bright eye
 Up towards the crescent moon, with
 grateful heart
 Called on the lovely wanderer who be-
 stowed
 That timely light, to share his joyous
 sport :
 And hence, a beaming Goddess with her
 Nymphs,
 Across the lawn and through the dark-
 some grove,
 Not unaccompanied with tuneful notes
 By echo multiplied from rock or cave,
 Swept in the storm of chase : as moon
 and stars
 Glance rapidly along the clouded heaven,
 When winds are blowing strong. The
 traveller slaked
 His thirst from rill or gushing fount, and
 thanked
 The Naiad. Sunbeams, upon distant
 hills
 Gliding apace, with shadows in their
 train,
 Might, with small help from fancy, be
 transformed
 Into fleet Oreads sporting visibly.
 The Zephyrs fanning, as they passed,
 their wings,
 Lacked not, for love, fair objects whom
 they wooed
 With gentle whisper. Withered boughs
 grotesque,
 Stripped of their leaves and twigs by
 hoary age,
 From depth of shaggy covert peeping
 forth
 In the low vale, or on steep mountain
 side ;
 And, sometimes, intermixed with stirring
 horns
 Of the live deer, or goat's depending
 beard,—
 These were the lurking Satyrs, a wild
 brood
 Of gamesome Deities ; or Pan himself,
 The simple shepherd's awe-inspiring
 God !”

The strain was aptly chosen ; and I
 could mark
 Its kindly influence, o'er the yielding
 brow
 Of our Companion, gradually diffused ;
 While, listening, he had paced the noise-
 less turf,

Like one whose untired ear a murmuring
 stream
 Detains ; but tempted now to interpose,
 He with a smile exclaimed :—
 “ ’Tis well you speak
 At a safe distance from our native land,
 And from the mansions where our youth
 was taught,
 The true descendants of those godly
 men
 Who swept from Scotland, in a flame of
 zeal,
 Shrine, altar, image, and the massy piles
 That harboured them,—the souls retain-
 ing yet
 The churlish features of that after-race
 Who fled to woods, caverns, and jutting
 rocks,
 In deadly scorn of superstitious rites,
 Or what their scruples construed to be
 such—
 How, think you, would they tolerate this
 scheme
 Of fine propensities, that binds, if urged
 Far as it might be urged, to now afresh
 The weeds of Romish phantasy, in vain
 Uprooted ; would re-consecrate our wells
 To good Saint Fillan and to fair Saint
 Anne ;
 And from long banishment recal Saint
 Giles,
 To watch again with tutelary love
 O'er stately Edinborough throned on
 crags ?
 A blessed restoration, to behold
 The patron, on the shoulders of his
 priests,
 Once more parading through her crowded
 streets
 Now simply guarded by the sober powers
 Of science, and philosophy, and sense !”

This answer followed.—“ You have
 turned my thoughts
 Upon our brave Progenitors, who rose
 Against idolatry with warlike mind,
 And shrunk from vain observances, to
 lurk
 In woods, and dwell under impending
 rocks
 Ill-sheltered, and oft wanting fire and
 food ;
 Why ?—for this very reason that they
 felt,
 And did acknowledge, wheresoever they
 moved,
 A spiritual presence, oft-times miscon-
 ceived,
 But still a high dependence, a divine
 Bounty and government, that filled their
 hearts
 With joy, and gratitude, and fear, and
 love ;

And from their fervent lips drew hymns of
praise,
That through the desert rang. • Though
favoured less,
Far less, than these, yet such, in their
degree,
Were those bewildered Pagans of old
time.
Beyond their own poor natures and
above
They looked; were humbly thankful
for the good
Which the warm sun solicited, and earth
Bestowed; were glad some,—and their
moral sense
They fortified with reverence for the
Gods;
And they had hopes that overstepped
the Grave.

Now, still our great Discoverers," he
exclaimed,
Raising his voice triumphantly, "obtain
From sense and reason less than these
obtained,
Though far misled? Shall men for
whom our age
Unbaffled powers of vision hath prepared,
To explore the world without and world
within,
Be joyless as the blind? Ambitious
spirits—
Whom earth, at this late season, hath
produced
To regulate the moving spheres, and
weigh
The planets in the hollow of their hand;
And they who rather dive than soar,
whose pains
Have solved the elements, or analysed
The thinking principle—shall they in
fact
Prove a degraded Race? and what avails
Renown, if their presumption make them
such?
Oh! there is laughter at their work in
heaven!
Inquire of ancient Wisdom: go, demand
Of mighty Nature, if 'twas ever meant
That we should pay far off yet be unraised;
That we should pore, and dwindle as we
pore,
Viewing all objects unremittingly
In disconnexion dead and spiritless;
And still dividing, and dividing still,
Break down all grandeur, still unsatisfied
With the perverse attempt, while little-
ness
May yet become more little; waging
thus
An impious warfare with the very life
Of our own souls!
And if indeed there be

An all-pervading Spirit, upon whom
Our dark foundations rest, could he de-
sign
That this magnificent effect of power,
The earth we tread, the sky that we be-
hold
By day, and all the pomp which night
reveals;
That these—and that superior mystery
Our vital frame, so fearfully devised,
And the dread soul within it—should
exist
Only to be examined, pondered, searched,
Probed, vexed, and criticised?—Accuse
me not
Of arrogance, unknown Wanderer as I
am,
If, having walked with Nature threescore
years,
And offered, far as frailty would allow,
My heart a daily sacrifice to Truth,
I now affirm of Nature and of Truth,
Whom I have served, that their Divinity
Revolts, offended at the ways of men
Swayed by such motives, to such ends
employed;
Philosophers, who, though the human
soul
Be of a thousand faculties composed,
And twice ten thousand interests, do yet
prize
This soul, and the transcendent universe,
No more than as a mirror that reflects
To proud Self-love her own intelligence;
That one, poor, finite object, in the abyss
Of infinite Being, twinkling restlessly!

Nor higher place can be assigned to
him
And his compeers—the laughing Sage of
France.—
Crowned was he, if my memory do not
err,
With laurel planted upon hoary hairs,
In sign of conquest by his wit achieved
And benefits his wisdom had conferred;
His stooping body tottered with wreaths
of flowers,
Opprest, far less becoming ornaments
Than Spring oft twines about a moulder-
ing tree;
Yet so it pleased a fond, a vain, old Man,
And a most frivolous people. Him I
mean
Who penned, to ridicule confiding faith,
This sorry Legend; which by chance we
found
Piled in a nook, through malice, as might
seem,
Among more innocent rubbish."—
Speaking thus,
With a brief notice when, and how, and
where,

We had espied the book, he drew it forth ;
And courteously, as if the act removed,
At once, all traces from the good Man's
heart

Of unbenign aversion or contempt,
Restored it to its owner. "Gentle
Friend."

Herewith he grasped the Solitary's hand,
"You have known lights and guides
better than these."

Ah ! let not aught amiss within dispose
A noble mind to practise on herself,
And tempt opinion to support the wrongs
Of passion : whatsoe'er be felt or feared,
From higher judgment-seats make no
appeal

To lower : can you question that the soul
Inherits an allegiance, not by choice
To be cast off, upon an oath proposed
By each new upstart notion ? In the
ports

Of levity no refuge can be found,
No shelter, for a spirit in distress.
He, who by wilful disesteem of life
And proud insensibility to hope,
Affronts the eye of Solitude, shall learn
That her mild nature can be terrible ;
That neither she nor Silence lack the
power

To avenge their own insulted majesty.

O blest seclusion ! when the mind ad-
mits

The law of duty ; and can therefore move
Through each vicissitude of loss and gain,
Linked in entire complacence with her
choice ;

When youth's presumptuousness is mel-
lowed down,
And manhood's vain anxiety dismissed ;
When wisdom shows her seasonable fruit,
Upon the boughs of sheltering leisure
hung

In sober plenty ; when the spirit stoops
To drink with gratitude the crystal
stream

Of unreprieved enjoyment ; and is pleased
To muse, and be saluted by the air
Of meek repentance, waiting wall-flower
scents

From out the crumbling ruins of fallen
pride

And chambers of transgression, now for-
lorn.

O, calm contented days, and peaceful
nights !

Who, when such good can be obtained,
would strive

To reconcile his manhood to a couch
Soft, as may seem, but, under that dis-
guise,

Stuffed with the thorny substance of the
past

For fixed annoyance ; and full oft beset
With floating dreams, black and discon-
solate.

The vapoury phantoms of futurity ?

Within the soul a faculty abides,
That with interpositions, which would
hide

And darken, so can deal that they be-
come

Contingencies of pomp ; and serve to
exalt

Her native brightness. As the ample
moon,

In the deep stillness of a summer eve
Rising behind a thick and lofty grove,
Burns, like an unconsuming fire of light,
In the green trees ; and, kindling on all
sides

Their leafy umbrage, turns the dusky veil
Into a substance glorious as her own,
Yea, with her own incorporated, by power
Capacious and serene. Like power abides
In man's celestial spirit ; virtue thus
Sets forth and magnifies herself ; thus
feeds

A calm, a beautiful, and silent fire,
From the encumbrances of mortal life,
From error, disappointment—nay, from
guilt ;

And sometimes, so relenting justice will,
From palpable oppressions of despair."

The Solitary by these words was
touched

With manifest emotion, and exclaimed :
"But how begin ? and whence ?—The

Mind is free—

Resolve," the haughty Moralist would say,
"This single act is all that we demand."

Alas ! such wisdom bids a creature fly
Whose very sorrow is, that time hath
shorn

His natural wings !—To friendship let
him turn

For succour ; but perhaps he sits alone
On stormy waters, tossed in a little boat
That holds but him, and can contain no
more !

Religion tells of amity sublime
Which no condition can preclude ; of
One

Who sees all suffering, comprehends all
wants,

All weakness fathoms, can supply all
needs :

But is that bounty absolute ?—His gifts,
Are they not, still, in some degree, re-
wards

For acts of service ? Can his love ex-
tend

To hearts that own not him ? Will
showers of grace,

When in the sky no promise may be seen,
Fall to refresh a parched and withered
land?

Or shall the groaning Spirit cast her load
At the Redeemer's feet?

In rueful tone,
With some impatience in his union, he
spake:

Back to my mind rushed all that had been
lured

To calm the Sufferer when his story
closed;

I looked for counsel as unbending now;
But a discriminating sympathy
Stooped to this apt reply:—

As men from men
Do, in the constitution of their souls,
Differ, by mystery, not to be explained;
And as we fall by various ways, and sink
One deeper than another, self-condemned,
Through manifold degrees of guilt and
shame;

So manifold and various are the ways
Of restoration, fashioned to the steps
Of all infirmity, and tending all
To the same point, attainable by all—
Peace in ourselves, and union with our
God.

For you, assuredly, a hopeful road
Lies open: we have heard from you a
voice

At every moment softened in its course
By tenderness of heart; have seen your
eye,

Even like an altar lit by fire from heaven,
Kindle before us.—Your discourse this
day,

That, like the fabled Lethe, wished to
flow

In creeping sadness, through oblivious
shades

Of death and night, has caught at every
turn

The colours of the sun. Access for you
is yet preserved to principles of truth,
Which the imaginative Will upholds
In seats of wisdom, not to be approached
By the inferior Faculty that moulds,
With her minute and speculative pains,
Opinion, ever changing!

I have seen
A curious child, who dwelt upon a tract
Of inland ground, applying to his ear
The convolutions of a smooth-lipped
shell;

To which, in silence hushed, his very
soul

Listened intensely; and his countenance
soon

Brightened with joy; for from within
were heard

Murmurings, whereby the monitor ex-
pressed—

Mysterious union with its native sea.
Even such a shell the universe itself
Is to the ear of Faith; and there are
times,

I doubt not, when to you it doth impart
Authentic tidings of invisible things;
Of ebb and flow, and ever-during power;
And central peace, subsisting at the
heart

Of endless agitation. Here you stand,
Adore, and worship, when you know it

not;
Pious beyond the intention of your
thought;

Devout above the meaning of your will.
—Yes, you have felt, and may not cease
to feel.

The estate of man would be indeed for-
lorn

If false conclusions of the reasoning
power

Made the eye blind, and closed the
passages

Through which the ear converses with
the heart.

Has not the soul, the being of your life,
Received a shock of awful consciousness,
In some calm season, when these lofty
rocks

At night's approach bring down the un-
clouded sky,

To rest upon their circumambient walls;
A temple framing of dimensions vast,
And yet not too enormous for the sound
Of human anthems,—choral song, or
burst

Sublime of instrumental harmony,
To glorify the Eternal! What if these
Did never break the stillness that prevails
Here,—if the solemn nightingale be mute,
And the soft woodlark here did never
chant

Her vespers,—Nature fails not to provide
Impulse and utterance. The whisper-
ing air

Sends inspiration from the shadowy
heights,

And blind recesses of the caverned rocks;
The little rills, and waters numberless,
Inaudible by daylight, blend their notes
With the loud streams: and often, at
the hour

When issue forth the first pale stars, is
heard,

Within the circuit of this fabric huge,
One voice—the solitary raven, flying
Athwart the concave of the dark blue
dome,

Unseen, perchance above all power of
sight—

An iron snell! with echoes from afar
Faint—and still fainter—as the cry, with
which

The wanderer accompanies her flight
Through the calm region, fades upon the
ear.

Diminishing by distance till it seemed
To expire ; yet from the abyss is caught
again,

And yet again recovered !

But descending
From these imaginative heights, that
yield

Far-stretching views into eternity,
Acknowledge that to Nature's humbler
power

Your cherished sullenness is forced to
bend

Even here, where her amenities are sown
With sparing hand. Then trust your-
self abroad

To range her blooming bowers, and
spacious fields,

Where on the labours of the happy throng
She smiles, including in her wide embrace
City, and town, and tower,—and sea with
ships

Sprinkled ;—be our Companion while we
track

Her rivers populous with gliding life ;
While, free as air, o'er printless sands we
march,

Or pierce the gloom of her majestic
woods ;

Roaming, or resting under grateful shade
In peace and meditative cheerfulness ;

Where living things, and things inanimate,
Do speak, at Heaven's command, to eye
and ear,

And speak to social reason's inner sense,
With inarticulate language.

For, the Man—
Who, in this spirit, communes with the
Fornis

Of nature, who with understanding
heart

Both knows and loves such objects as
excite

No morbid passions, no disquietude,
No vengeance, and no hatred—needs
must feel

The joy of that pure principle of love
So deeply, that, unsatisfied with aught

Less pure and exquisite, he cannot choose
But seek for objects of a kindred love

In fellow-natures and a kindred joy.
Accordingly he by degrees perceives

His feelings of aversion softened down ;
A holy tenderness pervade his frame.

His sanity of reason not impaired,
Say rather, all his thoughts now flowing
clear,

From a clear fountain flowing, he looks
round

And seeks for good ; and finds the good
he seeks :

Until abhorrence and contempt are
things

He only knows by name ; and, if he hear,
From other mouths, the language which

they speak
He is compassionate ; and has no thought,
No feeling, which can overcome his love.

And further ; by contemplating these
Forms

In the relations which they bear to man,
He shall discern, how, through the various
means

Which silently they yield, are multiplied
The spiritual presences of absent things.

Trust me, that for the instructed, time
will come

When they shall meet no object but may
teach

Some acceptable lesson to their minds
Of human suffering, or of human joy.

So shall they learn, while all things
speak of man,

Their duties from all forms, and general
laws,

And local accidents, shall tend alike
To rouse, to urge ; and, with the will,
confer

The ability to spread the blessings wide
Of true philanthropy. The light of love

Not failing, perseverance from their steps
Departing not, for their shall be con-
firmed

The glorious habit by which sense is made
Subservient still to moral purposes,

Auxiliar to divine. That change shall
clothe

The naked spirit, ceasing to deplore
The burthen of existence. Science then

Shall be a precious visitant : and then,
And only then, be worthy of her name :

For then her heart shall kindle ; her dull
eye,

Dull and inanimate, no more shall hang
Chained to its object in brute slavery ;

But taught with patient interest to
watch

The processes of things, and serve the
cause

Of order and distinctness, not for this
Shall it forget that its most noble use,

Its most illustrious province, must be
found

In furnishing clear guidance, a support
Not treacherous, to the mind's *perceptive*
power.

—So build we up the Being that we are ;
Thus deeply drinking in the soul of
things,

We shall be wise perforce ; and, while
inspired

By choice, and conscious that the Will is
free,

Shall move unswerving, even as if impelled

By strict necessity, along the path
Of order and of good. What'er we see,
Or feel, shall tend to quicken and refine ;
Shall fix, in calmer seats of moral
strength,
Earthly desires ; and raise, to loftier
heights
Of divine love, our intellectual soul."

Here closed the Sage that eloquent
harangue,

Poured forth with fervour in continuous
stream,

Such as, remote, mid savage wilderness,
An Indian Chief discharges from his
breast

Into the hearing of assembled tribes,
In open circle seated round, and hushed
As the unbreathing air, when not a leaf
Stirs in the mighty woods.—So did he
speak :

The words he uttered shall not pass away
Dispersed like music that the wind takes
up

By snatches, and lets fall, to be forgot-
ten :

No—they sank into me, the bounteous
gift

Of one whom time and nature had made
wise,

Gracing his doctrine with authority
Which hostile spirits silently allow ;

Of one accustomed to desires that feed
On fruitage gathered from the tree of
life ;

To hopes on knowledge and experience
built :

Of one in whom persuasion and belief
Had ripened into faith, and faith be-
come

A passionate intuition ; whence the
Soul,

Though bound to earth by ties of pity
and love,
From all injurious servitude was free.

The Sun, before his place of rest were
reached,

Had yet to travel far, but unto us,
To us who stood low in that hollow dell,
He had become invisible,—a pomp
Leaving behind of yellow radiance spread
Over the mountain sides, in contrast bold
With ample shadows, seemingly, no less
Than those resplendent lights, his rich
bequest :

A dispensation of his evening power.
—Adown the path that from the glen had
led

The funeral train, the Shepherd and his
Mate

Were soon descending :—forth to greet
them ran

Our little Page : the rustic pair approach ;
And in the Matron's countenance may be
read

Plain indication that the words, which
told

How that neglected Pensioner was sent
Before his time into a quiet grave,

Had done to her humanity no wrong :
But we are kindly welcomed—promptly
served

With ostentatious zeal.—Along the floor
Of the small Cottage in the lonely Dell

A grateful couch was spread for our
repose :

Where, in the guise of mountaineers, we
lay,

Stretched upon fragrant heath, and
lulled by sound

Of far-off torrents charming the still
night,

And, to tired limbs and over-busy
thoughts,

Inviting sleep and soft forgetfulness.

BOOK FIFTH

THE PASTOR

ARGUMENT

Farewell to the Valley—Reflections—A large
and populous Vale described—The Pastor's
Dwelling, and some account of him—Church
and Monuments—The Solitary musing, and
where—Roused—In the Churchyard the Soli-
tary communicates the thoughts which had
recently passed through his mind—Lofty
tone of the Wanderer's discourse of yesterday
adverted to—Rite of Baptism, and the pro-
fessions accompanying it, contrasted with the
real state of human life—Apology for the Rite
—Inconsistency of the best men—Acknow-
ledgment that practice falls far below the in-

junctions of duty as existing in the mind—
General complaint of a falling-off in the value
of life after the time of youth—Outward ap-
pearances of content and happiness in degree
illusory—Pastor approaches—Appeal made to
him—His answer—Wanderer in sympathy
with him—Suggestion that the least ambitious
enquirers may be most free from error—The
Pastor is desired to give some portraits of the
living or dead from his own observation of
life among these Mountains—and for what
purpose—Pastor consents—Mountain cottage
—Excellent qualities of its Inhabitants—
Solitary expresses his pleasure ; but denies
the praise of virtue to worth of this kind—
Feelings of the Priest before he enters upon
his account of persons interred in the Church—

yard—Graves of unbaptized Infants—Funeral and sepulchral observances, whence—Ecclesiastical Establishments, whence derived—Profession of belief in the doctrine of Immortality.

"FAREWELL, deep Valley, with thy one rude House,
And its small lot of life-supporting fields,
And guardian rocks!—Farewell, attractive seat!

To the still influx of the morning light
Open, and day's pure cheerfulness, but veiled

From human observation, as if yet
Primeval forests wrapped thee round
with dark

Impenetrable shade; once more farewell,
Majestic circuit, beautiful abyss.

By Nature destined from the birth of things

For quietness profound!"

Upon the side
Of that brown ridge, sole outlet of the vale,

Which foot of boldest stranger would attempt,

Lingering behind my comrades, thus I breathed

A parting tribute to a spot that seemed
Like the fixed centre of a troubled world.

Again I halted with reverted eyes;
The chain that would not slacken, was at length

Snapt,—and, pursuing leisurely my way,
How vain, thought I, is it by change of place

To seek that comfort which the mind denies;

Yet trial and temptation oft are shunned
Wisely; and by such tenure do we hold,

Frail life's possessions, that even they whose fate

Yields no peculiar reason of complaint
Might, by the promise that is here, be won

To steal from active duties, and embrace
Obscurity, and undisturbed repose.

—Knowledge, methinks, in these disordered times,

Should be allowed a privilege to have
Her anchorites, like piety of old;

Men, who, from faction sacred, and unstained

By war, might, if so minded, turn aside
Uncensured, and subsist, a scattered few

Living to God and nature, and content
With that communion. Consecrated be

The spots where such abide! But happier still

The Man, whom, furthermore, a hope attends

That meditation and research may guide

His privacy to principles and powers
Discovered or invented; or set forth,
Through his acquaintance with the ways of truth.

In lucid order; so that, when his course
Is run, some faithful eulogist may say,

He sought not praise, and praise did overlook

His unobtrusive merit; but his life,
Sweet to himself, was exercised in good.

That shall survive his name and memory.

Acknowledgments of gratitude sincere
Accompanied these musings; fervent

thanks
For any own peaceful lot and happy

choice;
A choice that from the passions of the

world
Withdrew, and fixed me in a still retreat;

Sheltered, but not to social duties lost,
Secluded, but not buried; and with song

Cheering my days, and with industrious thought;

With the ever-welcome company of books;

With virtuous friendship's soul-sustaining aid,

And with the blessings of domestic love.

Thus occupied in mind I paced along,
Following the rugged road, by sledge or

wheel
Worn in the moorland, till I overtook

My two Associates, in the morning sunshine

Halting together on a rocky knoll,
Whence the bare road descended rapidly

To the green meadows of another vale.

Here did our pensive Host put forth
his hand

In sign of farewell. "Nay," the old Man said,

"The fragrant air its coolness still retains;

The herds and flocks are yet abroad to crop

The dewy grass; you cannot leave us now,

We must not part at this inviting hour."

He yielded, though reluctant; for his mind

instinctively disposed him to retire

To his own covert; as a billow, heaved
Upon the beach, rolls back into the sea.

—So we descend: and winding round a rock

Attain a point that showed the valley—stretched

In length before us; and, not distant far,
Upon a rising ground a grey church-

tower,

Whose battlements were screened by
tufted trees.

And towards a crystal Mere, (that lay be-
yond

Among steep hills and woods embosomed,
flowed

A copious stream with boldly-winding
course;

Here traceable, there hidden—there again
To sight restored, and glittering in the
sun.

On the stream's bank, and every where,
appeared

Fair dwellings, single, or in social knots;
Some scattered o'er the level, others
perched

On the hill sides, a cheerful quiet scene,
Now in its morning purity arrayed.

"As 'mid some happy valley of the
Alps,"

Said I, "once happy, ere tyrannic power,
Wantonly breaking in upon the Swiss,
Destroyed their unoffending common-
wealth,

A popular equality reigns here,
Save for yon stately House beneath whose
roof

A rural lord might dwell."—"No feudal
pomp,

Or power," replied the Wanderer, "to
that House

Belongs, but there in his allotted Home
Abides, from year to year, a genuine

Priest,
The shepherd of his flock; or, as a king

Is styled, when most affectionately
praised,

The father of his people. Such is he;
And rich and poor, and young and old,

rejoice
Under his spiritual sway. He hath
vouchsafed

To me some portion of a kind regard;
And something also of his inner mind

Hath he imparted—but I speak of him
As he is known to all.

The calm delights
Of unambitious piety he chose,

And learning's solid dignity; though
born

Of knightly race, nor wanting powerful
friends.

Higher, in prime of manhood, he with-
drew

From academic bowers. He loved the
spot—

Who does not love his native soil?—he
prized

The ancient rural character, composed
Of simple manners, feelings unsuppressed

And undisguised, and strong and serious
thought;

A character reflected in himself,
With such embellishment as well be-
seems

His rank and sacred function. This deep
vale

Winds far in reaches hidden from our
sight,

And one a turreted manorial hall
Adorns, in which the good Man's ances-
tors

Have dwelt through ages—Patrons of
this Cure.

To them, and to his own judicious pains,
The Vicar's dwelling, and the whole

domain,
Owes that presiding aspect which might

well
Attract your notice; statelier than could
else

Have been bestowed, through course of
common chance,

On an unwealthy mountain Benefice."

This said, oft pausing, we pursued our
way;

Nor reached the village-churchyard till
the sun

Travelling at steadier pace than ours,
had risen

Above the summits of the highest hills,
And round our path darted oppressive

beams.

As chanced, the portals of the sacred
Pile

Stood open; and we entered. On my
frame.

At such transition from the fervid air,
A grateful coolness fell, that seemed to

strike
The heart, in concert with that temperate

awe
And natural reverence which the place
inspired.

Not raised in nice proportions was the
pile,

But large and massy; for duration built;
With pillars crowded, and the roof up-
held

By naked rafters intricately crossed,
Like leafless underboughs, in some thick

wood,
All withered by the depth of shade above.

Admonitory texts inscribed the walls,
Each, in its ornamental scroll, enclosed;

Each also crowned with winged heads—
a pair

Of rudely-painted Cherubim. The floor
Of nave and aisle, in unpretending guise,

Was occupied by oaken benches ranged
In seemly rows; the chancel only showed

Some vain distinctions, marks of earthly
state

By immemorial privilege allowed;
 Though with the Encincture's special
 sanctity
 But ill according. An heraldic shield,
 Varying its tincture with the changeful
 light,
 Imbued the altar-window; fixed aloft
 A faded hatchment hung, and one by
 time
 Yet undiscoloured. A capacious pew
 Of sculptured oak stood here, with
 drapery lined;
 And marble monuments were here dis-
 played
 Thronging the walls; and on the floor
 beneath
 Sepulchral stones appeared, with em-
 blems graven
 And foot-worn epitaphs, and some with
 small
 And shining effigies of brass inlaid.

The tribute by these various records
 claimed,
 Duly we paid, each after each, and read
 The ordinary chronicle of birth,
 Office, alliance, and promotion—all
 Ending in dust; of upright magistrates,
 Grave doctors strenuous for the mother-
 church,
 And uncorrupted senators, alike
 To king and people true. A brazen plate,
 Not easily deciphered, told of one
 Whose course of earthly honour was be-
 gun
 In quality of page among the train
 Of the eighth Henry, when he crossed the
 seas
 His royal state to show, and prove his
 strength
 In tournament, upon the fields of France.
 Another tablet registered the death,
 And praised the gallant bearing, of a
 Knight
 Tried in the sea-fights of the second
 Charles.
 Near this brave Knight his Father lay
 entombed;
 And, to the silent language giving voice,
 I read,—how in his manhood's earlier day
 He, 'mid the afflictions of intestine war
 And rightful government subverted, found
 One only solace—that he had espoused
 A virtuous Lady tenderly beloved
 For her benign perfections; and yet more
 Endeared to him, for this, that, in her
 state
 Of wedlock richly crowned with Heaven's
 regard,
 She with a numerous issue filled his
 house,
 Who thrive, like plants, uninjured by the
 storm

That laid their country waste. No need
 to speak
 Of less particular notices assigned
 To Youth or Maiden gone before their
 time,
 And Matrons and unwedded Sisters old;
 Whose charity and goodness were re-
 hearsed
 In modest panegyric.
 "These dim lines,
 What would they tell?" said I—but,
 from the task
 Of puzzling out that faded narrative,
 With whisper soft my venerable Friend
 Called me; and, looking down the dark-
 some aisle,
 I saw the Tenant of the lonely vale
 Standing apart; with curved arm re-
 lined
 On the baptismal font; his pallid face
 Upruned, as if his mind were rapt, or
 lost
 In some abstraction;—gracefully he
 stood,
 The semblance bearing of a sculptured
 form
 That leans upon a monumental urn
 In peace, from morn to night, from year
 to year.

Him from that posture on the Sexton
 rouse;
 Who entered, humming carelessly a tune,
 Continuation haply of the notes
 That had beguiled the work from which
 he came,
 With spade and mattock o'er his shoulder
 hung;
 To be deposited, for future need,
 In their appointed place. The pale Re-
 cluse
 Withdrew; and straight we followed,—to
 a spot
 Where sun and shade were intermixed;
 for there
 A broad oak, stretching forth its leafy
 arms
 From an adjoining pasture, overhung
 Small space of that green churchyard
 with a light
 And pleasant awning. On the moss-
 grown wall
 My ancient Friend and I together took
 Our seats; and thus the Solitary spake
 Standing before us:—

"Did you note the mien
 Of that self-solaced, easy-hearted churl,
 Death's hireling, who scoops out his
 neighbour's grave,
 Or wraps an old acquaintance up in clay,
 All unconcerned as he would bind a sheaf,
 Or plant a tree. And did you hear his

I was abruptly summoned by the sound
From some affecting images and thoughts,
Which then were silent ; but crave utter-
ance now.

Much," he continued, "with dejected
look,

"Much, yesterday, was said in glowing
phrase

Of our sublime dependencies, and hopes,
For future states of being ; and the wings
Of speculation, joyfully outspread,

Hovered above our destiny on earth :
But stoop, and place the prospect of the
soul

In sober contrast with reality,
And man's substantial life. If this mite
earth

Of what it holds could speak, and every
grave

Were as a volume, shut, yet capable
Of yielding its contents to eye and ear,
We should recoil, stricken with sorrow
and shayne,

To see disclosed, by such dread proof,
How fil

That which is done accords with what is
known

To reason, and by conscience is enjoined ;
How idly, how perversely, life's whole
course,

To this conclusion, deviates from the
line,

Or of the end stops short, proposed to all
At her aspiring outset.

Mark the babe
Not long accustomed to this breathing
world ;

One that hath barely learned to shape a
smile,

Though yet irrational of soul, to grasp
With tiny finger—to let fall a tear ;
And, as the heavy cloud of sleep dis-
solves,

To stretch his limbs, bemocking, as might
seem,

The outward functions of intelligent man ;
A grave proficient in amusive feats
Of puppetry, that from the lap declare
His expectations, and announce his
claims

To that inheritance which millions rue
That they were ever born to ! In due
time

A day of solemn ceremonial comes ;
When they, who for this Minor hold in
trust

Rights that transcend the loftiest heri-
tage

Of mere humanity, present their Charge,
For this occasion daintily adorned,
At the baptismal font. And when the
pure

And consecrating element hath cleansed
The original stain, the child is there
received

Into the second ark, Christ's church, with
trust

That he, from wrath redeemed, therein
shall float

Over the billows of this troublesome
world

To the fair land of everlasting life.
Corrupt affections, covetous desires,

Are all renounced : high as the thought
of man

Can carry virtue, virtue is professed :
A dedication made, a promise given

For due provision to control and guide,
And unremitting progress to ensure

In holiness and truth."

"You cannot blame,"
Here interposing fervently I said,

"Rites which attest that Man by nature
lies

Bedded for good and evil in a gulf .
Fearfully low ; nor will your judgment
scorn

Those services, whereby attempt is made
To lift the creature toward that emi-
nence

On which, now fallen, crewhile in
majesty

He stood : or if not so, whose top serene
At least he feels 'ris given him to descry ;

Not without aspirations, evermore
Returning, and injunctions from within

Doubt to cast off and weariness ; in
trust

That what the Soul perceives, if glory
lost,

May be, through pains and persevering
hope,

Recovered : or, if hitherto unknown,
Lies within reach, and one day shall be
gained."

"I blame them not," he calmly an-
swered—"no :

The outward ritual and established forms
With which communities of men invest

These inward feelings, and the aspiring
vows

To which the lips give public utterance
Are both a natural process ; and by me
Shall pass uncensured ; though the issue
prove,

Bringing from age to age its own re-
proach,

Incongruous, impotent, and blank.—
But, oh !

If to be weak is to be wretched—miser-
able,

As the lost Angel by a human voice
Hath mournfully pronounced, then, in
my mind,

Far better not to move at all than move
By impulse sent from such illusive
power,—

That finds and cannot fasten down;
that grasps

And is rejoiced, and loses while it
grasps;

That tempts, emboldens—for a time
sustains,

And then betrays; accuses and inflicts
Remorseless punishment; and so re-
treads

The inevitable circle: better far
Than this, to graze the herb in thought-
less peace,

By foresight or remembrance, undis-
turbed!

Philosophy! and thou more vaunted
name

Religion! with thy stately retinue,
Faith, Hope, and Charity—from the
visible world

Choose for your emblems whatsoe'er ye
find

Of safest guidance or of firmest trust—
The torch, the star, the anchor; nor
except

The cross itself, at whose unconscious
feet

The generations of mankind have knelt
Ruefully seized, and shedding bitter
tears,

And through that conflict seeking rest—
of you,

High-titled Powers, am I constrained to
ask;

Here standing, with the unvoyageable
sky

In faint reflection of infinitude
Stretched overhead, and at my pensive
feet

A subterranean's magazine of bones,
In whose dark vaults my own shall soon
be laid,

Where are your triumphs? your do-
minion where?

And in what age admitted and con-
firmed?

—Not for a happy land do I enquire,
Island or grove, that hides a blessed few
Who, with obedience willing and sincere,
To your serene authorities conform;
But whom, I ask, of individual Souls,
Have ye withdrawn from passion's
crooked ways,

Inspired, and thoroughly fortified?—If
the heart

Could be inspected to its inmost folds
By sight undazzled with the glare of
praise,

Who shall be named—in the resplendent
line

Of sages, martyrs, confessors—the man
Whom the best might of faith, wherever
fixed,

For one day's little compass, has pre-
served

From painful and discreditable shocks
Of contradiction, from some vague de-
sire

Culpably cherished, or corrupt relapse
To some unsanctioned fear?

“If this be so,
And Man,” said I, “be in his noblest
shape

Thus pitifully infirm: then, he who made,
And who shall judge the creature, will
forgive.

—Yet, in its general tenor, your complaint
I call too true: and, surely not mis-
placed:

For, from this pregnant spot of ground,
such thoughts

Rise to the notice of a serious mind
By natural exhalation. With the dead

In their repose, the living in their mirth,
Who can reflect, unmoved, upon the
round

Of smooth and solemnized complacen-
cies,

By which, on Christian lands, from age
to age

Profession mocks performance. Earth's
sick,

And Heaven is weary, of the hollow
words

Which States and Kingdoms utter when
they talk

Of truth and justice. Turn to private
life

And social neighbourhood; look we to
ourselves;

A light of duty shines on every day
For all: and yet how few are warmed or
cheered!

How few who mingle with their fellow-
men

And still remain self-governed, and
apart,

Like this our honoured Friend; and
thence acquire

Right to expect his vigorous decline,
That promises to the end a blest old
age!”

“Yet,” with a smile of triumph, thus
exclaimed

The Solitary, “in the life of man,
If to the poetry of common speech

Faith may be given, we see as in a glass
A true reflection of the circling year.

With all its seasons. Grant that Spring
is there,

In spite of many a rough ungodward
blast,

Hopeful and promising with buds and flowers ;

Yet where is glowing Summer's long rich day,

That *ought* to follow, faithfully expressed ?

And mellow Autumn, charged with bounteous fruit,

Where is she imaged ? in what favoured clime

Her lavish pomp, and ripe magnificence ? — Yet, while the better part is missed, the worse

In man's autumnal season is set forth With a resemblance not to be denied.

And that contents him ; bowers that bear no more

The voice of gladness, less and less supply Of outward sunshine and internal warmth ;

And, with this change, sharp air and falling leaves,

Foretelling aged Winter's desolate sway.

How pay the habitations that bedeck This fertile valley ! Not a house but seems

To give assurance of content within ; Embosomed happiness, and placid love ;

As if the sunshine of the day were met With answering brightness in the hearts of all

Who walk this favoured ground. But chance-regards,

And notice forced upon incurious ears : These, if these only, acting in despite Of the encomiums by my Friend pronounced

On humble life, forbid the judging mind To trust the smiling aspect of this fair

And noiseless commonwealth. The simple race

Of mountaineers (by nature's self removed

From foul temptations, and by constant care

Of a good shepherd tended as themselves Do tend their flocks) partake man's general lot

With little mitigation. They escape, Perchance, the heavier woes of guilt ;

feel not The tedium of fantastic idleness :

Yet life, as with the multitude, with them Is fashioned like an ill-constructed tale ;

That on the outset wastes its gay desires, Its fair adventures, its enlivening hopes,

And pleasant interests—for the sequel leaving grace ;

Old things repeated with diminished And all the laboured novelties at best

Imperfect substitutes, whose use and power

Evince the want and weakness whence they spring."

While in this serious mood we held discourse,

The reverend Pastor toward the church-yard gate

Approached ; and, with a mild respectful air

Of native cordiality, our Friend Advanced to greet him. With a gracious

smile Was he received, and mutual joy prevailed.

Awhile they stood in conference, and I guess

That he, who now upon the mossy wall Sate by my side, had vanished, if a wish

Could have transferred him to the flying clouds,

Or the least penetrable hiding-place In his own valley's rocky guardianship.

—For me, I looked upon the pair, well pleased :

Nature had framed them both, and both were marked

By circumstance, with intermixture fine Of contrast and resemblance. To an oak

Hardy and grand, a weather-beaten oak. Fresh in the strength and majesty of age,

One might be likened : flourishing appeared,

Though somewhat past the fulness of his prime.

The other—like a stately sycamore, That spreads, in gentle pomp, its honied shade.

A general greeting was exchanged ; and soon

The Pastor learned that his approach had given

A welcome interruption to discourse Grave, and in truth too often sad.—"Is

Man

A child of hope ? Do generations press On generations, without progress made ?

Halts the individual, ere his hairs be grey,

Perforce ? Are we a creature in whom good

Preponderates, or evil ? Doth the will Acknowledge reason's law ? A living

power

Is virtue, or no better than a name, Fleeting as health or beauty, and unsound ?

So that the only substance which remains,

(For thus the tenor of complaint hath run)

Among so many shadows, are the pains And penalties of miserable life,

Doomed to decay, and then expire in dust !

—Our cogitations this way have been drawn,

These are the points," the Wanderer said, "on which

Our inquest turns.—Accord, good Sir ! the light

Of your experience to dispel this gloom : By your persuasive wisdom shall the heart

That frets, or languishes, be stilled and cheered."

"Our nature," said the Priest, in mild reply,

"Angels may weigh and fathom : they perceive,

With undistempered and unclouded spirit,

The object as it is ; but, for ourselves, That speculative height we may not reach.

The good and evil are our own : and we Are that which we would contemplate from far.

Knowledge, for us, is difficult to gain— Is difficult to gain, and hard to keep— As virtue's self ; like virtue is beset With snares ; tried, tempted, subject to decay.

Love, admiration, fear, desire, and hate, Blind were we without these : through these alone

Are capable to notice or discern Or to record ; we judge, but cannot be Indifferent judges. Spite of proudest boast,

Reason, best reason, is to imperfect man An effort only, and a noble aim ;

A crown, an attribute of sovereign power, Still to be courted—never to be won.

—Look forth, or each man dive into himself :

What sees he but a creature too per- turbed ;

That is transported to excess ; that yearns,

Regrets, or trembles, wrongly, or too much ;

Hopes rashly, in disgust as rash recoils ; Batters on spleen, or moulders in despair ?

Thus comprehension fails, and truth is missed ;

Thus darkness and delusion round our path

Spread, from disease, whose subtle injury lurks

Within the very faculty of sight.

Yet for the general purposes of faith In Providence, for solace and support,

We may not doubt that who can best subject

The will to reason's law, can strictliest live

And act in that obedience, he shall gain The clearest apprehension of those

truths,

Which unassisted reason's utmost power Is too infirm to reach. But, waiving

this, And our regards confining within bounds Of less exalted consciousness, through which

The very multitude are free to range, We safely may affirm that human life

Is either fair and tempting, a soft scene Grateful to sight, refreshing to the soul,

Or a forbidden tract of cheerless view ; Even as the same is looked at, or ap- proached.

Thys, when in changeful April fields are white

With new-fallen snow, if from the sullen north

Your walk conduct you hither, ere the sun

Hath gained his noontide height, this churchyard, filled

With mounds transversely lying side by side

From east to west, before you will appear An unillumined, blank, and dreary, plain,

With more than wintry cheerlessness and gloom

Saddening the heart. Go forward, and look back ;

Look, from the quarter whence the lord of light,

Of life, of love, and gladness doth dis- pense

His beams ; which, unexcluded in their fall,

Upon the southern side of every grave Have gently exercised a melting power ;

Then will a vernal prospect greet your eye,

All fresh and beautiful, and green and bright,

Hopeful and cheerful :—vanished is the pall

That overspread and chilled the sacred turf,

Vanished or hidden ; and the whole do- main,

To some, too lightly minded might appear

A meadow carpet for the dancing hours. —This contrast, not unsuitable to life,

Is to that other state more apposite, Death and its two-fold aspect ! wintry

—one,

Cold, sullen, blank, from hope and joy shut out ;

The other, which the ray, divine hath
touched,
Replete with vivid promise, bright as
spring."

"We see, then, as we feel," the Wanderer thus

With a complacent animation spake,
"And in your judgment, Sir! the mind's
repose

On evidence is not to be ensured
By act of naked reason. Moral truth
Is no mechanic structure, built by rule:
And which, once built, retains a steadfast
shape

And undisturbed proportions; but a
thing

Subject, you deem, to vital accidents?
And like the water-lily, lives and thrives,
Whose roots are fixed in stable earth, whose
head

Floats on the tossing waves. With joy
sincere

I re-salute these sentiments confirmed
By your authority. But how acquire
The inward principle that gives effect
To outward argument; the passive will
Meek to admit; the active energy,
Strong and unbounded to embrace, and
firm

To keep and cherish? how shall man
unite

With self-forgetting tenderness of heart
An earth despising dignity of soul?
Wise in that union, and without it
blind!"

"The way," said I, "to court, if not
obtain

The ingenuous mind, apt to be set
aright;

This, in the lonely dell discoursing, you
Declared at large; and by what exercise
From visible nature, or the inner self
Power may be trained, and renovation
brought

To those who need the gift. But, after
all,

Is aught so certain as that man is doomed
To breathe beneath a vault of ignorance?
The natural roof of that dark house in
which

His soul is pent! How little can be
known—

This is the wise man's sigh; how far we
err—

This is the good man's not unfrequent
pang!

And they perhaps err least, the lowly
class

Whom a benign necessity compels
To follow reason's least ambitious
course;

W.P.

Such do I mean who, unperplexed by
doubt,

And unincited by a wish to look
Into high objects farther than they may,
Pace to and fro, from morn till even-tide,
The narrow avenue of daily toil
For daily bread."

"Yes," buoyantly exclaimed
The pale Recluse—"praise to the sturdy
plough,

And patient spade; praise to the simple
crook,

And ponderous loom—resounding while
it holds

Body and mind in one captivity;
And let the light mechanic tool be hailed
With honour; which, encasing by the
power

Of long companionship, the artist's hand,
Cuts off that hand, with all its world of
nerves,

From a too busy commerce with the
heart!

—Inglorious implements of craft and
toil,

Both ye that shape and build, and ye
that force,

By slow solicitation, earth to yield
Her annual bounty, sparingly dealt
forth

With wise reluctance; you would I extol,
Not for gross good alone which ye pro-
duce,

But for the impertinent and ceaseless
strife

Of proofs and reasons ye preclude—in
those

Who to your dull society are born,
And with their humble birthright rest
content.

—Would I had ne'er renounced it!"

A slight flush

Of moral anger previously had tinged
The old Man's cheek; but, at this closing
turn

Of self-reproach, it passed away. Said
he,

"That which we feel we utter; as we
think

So have we argued; reaping for our pains
No visible recompense. For our relief
You," to the Pastor turning thus he
spake,

"Have kindly interposed. May I en-
treat

Your further help? The mine of real life
Dig for us; and present us, in the shape
Of virgin ore, that gold which we, by
pains

Fruitless as those of ætry alchemists,
Seek from the torturing crucible. There
lies

Around us a domain where you have long

S S

Watched both the outward course and
inner heart :

Give us, for our abstractions, solid facts ;
For our disputes, plain pictures. Say
what man

He is who cultivates yon hanging field ;
What qualities of mind she bears, who
comes,

For morn and evening service, with her
pail,

To that green pasture ; place before our
sight

The family who dwell within yon house
Fenced round with glittering laurel ; or
in that

Below, from which the curling smoke
ascends.

Or rather, as we stand on holy earth,
And have the dead around us, take from
them

Your instances ; for they are both best
known,

And by frail man most equitably judged.
Epitomise the life ; pronounce, you can,
Authentic epitaphs on some of these

Who, from their lowly mansions hither
brought,

Beneath this turf lie mouldering at our
feet :

So, by your records, may our doubts be
solved ;

And so, not searching higher, we may
learn

*To prize the breath we share with human
kind ;*

And look upon the dust of man with awe."

The Priest replied—"An office you
impose

For which peculiar requisites are mine ;
Yet much, I feel, is wanting—else the
task

Would be most grateful. True indeed it
is

That they whom death has hidden from
our sight

Are worthiest of the mind's regard ; with
these

The future cannot contradict the past :
Mortality's last exercise and proof

Is undergone ; the transit made that
shows

The very Soul, revealed as she departs.
Yet, on your first suggestion, will I give,
Ere we descend into these silent vaults,

One picture from the living.

You behold,
High on the breast of yon dark mountain,
dark

With stony barrenness, a shining speck
Bright as a sunbeam sleeping till a
shower

Brush it away, or cloud pass over it ;

And such it might be deemed—a sleeping
sunbeam ;

But 'tis a plot of cultivated ground,
Cut off, an island in the dusky waste ;

And that attractive brightness is its own.
The lofty site, by nature framed to tempt

Amid a wilderness of rocks and stones
The tiller's hand, a hermit might have
chosen,

For opportunity presented, thence
Far forth to send his wandering eye o'er
land

And ocean, and look down upon the
works,

The habitations, and the ways of men,
Himself unseen ! But no tradition tells

That ever hermit dipped his maple dish
In the sweet spring that lurks 'mid yon
green fields ;

And no such visionary views belong
To those who occupy and till the ground,

High on that mountain where they long
have dwelt

A wedded pair in childless solitude.
A house of stones collected on the spot,

By rude hands built, with rocky knoll in
front,

Backed also by a ledge of rock, whose
crest

Of birch-trees waves over the chimney
top ;

A rough abode—in colour, shape, and
size.

Such as in unsafe times of border-war
Might have been wished for and con-
trived, to elude

The eye of roving plunderer—for their
need

Suffices ; and unshaken bears the assault
Of their most dreaded foe, the strong
South-west

In anger blowing from the distant sea.
—Alone within her solitary hut ;

There, or within the compass of her
fields,

At any moment may the Dame be found,
True as the stock-dove to her shallow
nest

And to the grove that holds it. She be-
guiles

By intermingled work of house and field
The summer's day, and winter's ; with
success

Not equal, but sufficient to maintain.
Even at the worst, a smooth stream of
content,

Until the expected hour at which her
Mate

From the far-distant quarry's vault re-
turns ;

And by his converse crowns a silent day
With evening cheerfulness. In powers
of mind,

In scale of culture, few among my flock
Hold lower rank than this sequestered
pair :

But true humility descends from heaven ;
And that best gift of heaven hath fallen
on them :

Abundant recompense for every want.
—Scoop from your height, ye proud, and
copy these !

Who, in their noiseless dwelling-place,
can hear

The voice of wisdom whispering scripture
texts

For the mind's government, or temper's
peace ;

And recommending for their mutual heed
Forgiveness, patience, hope, and cha-
rity !”

“ Much as I pleased,” the grey-haired

Wanderer said,

“ When to those shining fields our notice
first

You turned ; and yet more pleased have
from your lips

Gathered this fair report of them who
dwell

In that retirement ; whither, by such
course

Of evil hap and good as oft awaits
A tired way-faring man, once I was

brought

While traversing alone yon mountain
pass.

Dark on my road the autumnal evening
fell,

And night succeeded with unusual gloom,
So hazardous that feet and hands became

Guides better than mine eyes—until a
light

High in the gloom appeared, too high,
methought,

For human habitation ; but I longed
To reach it, destitute of other hope.

I looked with steadiness as sailors look
On the north star, or watch-tower's dis-
tant lamp,

And saw the light—now fixed—and
shifting now—

Not like a dancing meteor, but in line
Of never-varying motion, to and fro.

It is no night-fire of the naked hills,
Thought I—some friendly covert must be
near.

With this persuasion thitherward my
steps

I turn, and reach at last the guiding
light ;

Joy to myself ! but to the heart of her
Who there was standing on the open hill,

(The same kind Matron whom your
tongue hath praised)

Alarm and disappointment ! The alarm

Ceased, when she learned through what
mishap I came,
And by what help had gained those dis-
tant fields.

Drawn from her cottage, on that airy
height,

Bearing a lantern in her hand she stood,
Or paced the ground—to guide her Hus-
band home,

By that unwearied signal, kenned afar ;
An anxious duty ! which the lofty site,

Traversed but by a few irregular paths,
Imposes, whensoever untoward chance

Detains him after his accustomed hour
Till night lies black upon the ground.

“ But come,
Come,” said the Matron, “ to our poor
abode ;

Those dark rocks hide it !” Entering, I
beheld

A blazing fire—beside a cleanly hearth
Sate down ; and to her office, with leave
asked,

The Dame returned.

Or ere that glowing pile
Of mountain turf required the builder's
hand

Its wasted splendour to repair, the door
Opened, and she re-entered with glad
looks,

Her Helpmate following. Hospitable
fare,

Frank conversation, made the evening's
treat :

Need a bewildered traveller wish for
more ?

But more was given ; I studied as we
sate

By the bright fire, the good Man's form,
and face

Not less than beautiful ; an open brow
Of undisturbed humanity ; a cheek

Suffused with something of a feminine
hue ;

Eyes beaming courtesy and mild regard ;
But, in the quicker turns of the dis-
course,

Expression slowly varying, that evinced
A tardy apprehension. From a fount

Lost, thought I, in the obscurities of time
But honoured once, those features and
that mien

May have descended, though I see them
here.

In such a man, so gentle and subdued,
Withal so graceful in his gentleness,

A race illustrious for heroic deeds,
Humbled, but not degraded, may expire.

This pleasing fancy (cherished and up-
held

By sundry recollections of such fall
From high to low, ascent from low to
high,

As books record, and even the careless
mind
Cannot but notice among men and
(things)
Went with me to the place of my repose.

Roused by the crowing cock at dawn
of day,

I yet had risen too late to interchange
A morning salutation with my Host,
Gone forth already to the far-off seat
Of his day's work. 'Three dark mid-
winter months

'Pass,' said the Matron, 'and I never
see,

'Save when the sabbath brings its kind
release,

'My Helpmate's face by light of day.
He quits

'His door in darkness, nor 'till dusk
returns.

'And, through Heaven's blessing, thus
we gain the bread

'For which we pray; and for the wants
provide

'Of sickness, accident, and helpless age.
'Companions have I many; many
friends,

'Dependants, comforters—my wheel, my
fire,

'All day the house-clock ticking in mine
car,

'The cackling hen, the tender chicken
brood,

'And the wild birds that gather round
my porch.

'This honest sheep-dog's countenance I
read;

'With him can talk; nor blush to waste
a word

'On creatures less intelligent and shrewd.
'And if the blustering wind thrives
the clouds

'Care not for me, he lingers round my
door,

'And makes me pastime when our tem-
pers suit;—

'But, above all, my thoughts are my
support,

'My comfort:—would that they were
oftener fixed

'On what, for guidance in the way that
leads

'To heaven, I know, by my Redeemer
taught.

The Matron ended—nor could I forbear
To exclaim—'O happy! yielding to the
law

Of these privations, richer in the main!—
While thankless thousands are oppress
and clogged

By ease and leisure; by the very wealth
And pride of opportunity made poor;

While tens of thousands falter in their
path,

And sink, through utter want of cheering
light;

For you the hours of labour do not flag;
For you each evening hath its shining
star,

And every sabbath-day its golden sun."

"Yes!" said the Solitary with a smile
That seemed to break from an expanding
heart,

"The untutored bird may found, and so
construct,

And with such soft materials line, her nest
Fixed in the centre of a prickly brake,

That the thorns wound her not; they
only guard.

Powers not unjustly likened to those
gifts

Of happy instinct which the woodland
bird

Shares with her species, nature's grace
sometimes

Upon the individual doth confer,
Among her higher creatures born and
trained

To use of reason. And, I own that, tired
Of the ostentatious world—a swelling
stage

With empty actions and vain passions
stuffed,

And from the private struggles of man-
kind

Hoping far less than I could wish to
hope,

Far less than once I trusted and be-
lieved—

I love to hear of those, who, not con-
tending

Nor summoned to contend for virtue's
prize,

Miss not the humbler good at which they
aim,

Blest with a kindly faculty to blunt
The edge of adverse circumstance, and
turn

Into their contraries the petty plagues
And hindrances with which they stand
beset.

In early youth, among my native hills,
I knew a Scottish Peasant who possessed
A few small crofts of stone-encumbered
ground;

Masses of every shape and size, that lay
Scattered about under the mouldering
walls

Of a rough precipice; and some, apart,
In quarters unobnoxious to such chance,
As if the moon had showered them down
in spite.

But he repined not. Though the
plough was scared

By these obstructions, 'round the shady
stones

A fertilising moisture,' said the Swain,
Gathers, and is preserved; and feeding
dews

'And damps, through all the droughty
summer day

'From out their substance issuing, main-
tain

'Herbage that never fails: no grass
springs up

'So green, so fresh, so plentiful, as mine!'
But thinly sown these natures; rare, at
least,

The mutual aptitude of seed and soil •
That yields such kindly product. He,

whose bed
Perhaps yon loose sods cover, the poor

'Pensioner
Brought yesterday from our sequestered

'dell
Here to lie down in lasting quiet, he,

If living now, could otherwise report
Of rustic loneliness: that grey-haired

'Orphan—
So call him, for humanity to him

No parent was—feelingly could have
told,

In life, in death, what solitude can breed
Of selfishness, and cruelty, and vice;

Or, if it breed not, hath not power to cure.
—But your compliance, Sir! with our

request
My words too long have hindered."

Undeterred,
Perhaps incited rather, by these shocks,

In no ungracious opposition, given
To the confiding spirit of his own

Experienced faith, the reverend Pastor
said,

Around him looking; "Where shall I
begin?

Who shall be first selected from my flock
Gathered together in their peaceful fold?"

He paused—and having lifted up his
eyes

'To the pure heaven, he cast them down
again

'Upon the earth beneath his feet; and
spake:—

"To a mysteriously-united pair
This place is consecrate; to Death and

Life,
And to the best affections that proceed

From their conjunction; consecrate to
faith

In Him who bled for man upon the cross;
Hallowed to revelation; and no less

To reason's mandates; and the hopes
divine

Of pure imagination;—above all,
To charity, and love, that have provided,

Within these precincts, a capacious bed
And receptacle, open to the good

And evil, to the just and the unjust;
In which they find an equal resting-place:

Even as the multitude of kindred brooks
And streams, whose murmur fills this

hollow vale,
Whether their course be turbulent or

smooth,
Their waters clear or sullied, all are lost

Within the bosom of yon crystal Lake,
And end their journey in the same re-
pose!

And blest are they who sleep; and we
that know,

While in a spot like this we breathe and
walk,

That all beneath us by the wings are
covered

Of motherly humanity, outspread
And gathering all within their tender

shade,
Though loth and slow to come! A

battle-field,
In stillness left when slaughter is no

more,
With this compared, makes a strange

spectacle!
A dismal prospect yields the wild shore

strewn
With wrecks, and trod by feet of young

and old
Wandering about in miserable search

Of friends or kindred, whom the angry
sea

Restores not to their prayer! Ah! who
would think

That all the scattered subjects which
compose

Earth's melancholy vision through the
space

Of all her climes—these wretched, these
depraved,

'To virtue lost, insensible of peace,
From the delights of charity cut off,

To pity dead, the oppressor and the
oppress;

Tyrants who utter the destroying word,
And slaves who will consent to be de-

stroyed—
Were of one species with the sheltered few,

Who, with a dutiful and tender hand,
Lodged, in a dear appropriated spot,

This file of infants; some that never
breathed

The vital air; others, which, though
allowed

That privilege, did yet expire too soon,
Or with too brief a warning, to admit

Administration of the holy rite
That lovingly consigns the babe to the

arms

Of Jesus, and his everlasting care.
These that in trembling hope are laid
apart ;

And the besprinkled nursling, unrequired
Till he begins to smile upon the breast
That feeds him ; and the tottering little-

one
Taken from air and sunshine when the
rose

Of infancy first blooms upon his cheek ;
The thinking, thoughtless, school-boy ;
the bold youth

Of soul impetuous, and the bashful maid
Smitten while all the promises of life
Are opening round her ; those of middle

age,
Cast down while confident in strength
they stand,

Like pillars fixed more firmly, as might
seem,

And more secure, by very weight of all
That, for support, rests on them ; the
decayed

And burthensome ; and lastly, that poor
few

Whose light of reason is with age extinct ;
The hopeful and the hopeless, first and
last,

The earliest summoned and the longest
spared—

Are here deposited, with tribute paid
Various, but unto each some tribute paid ;
As if, amid these peaceful hills and
groves,

Society were touched with kind concern,
And gentle 'Nature grieved, that one
should die ;

Or, if the change demanded no regret,
Observed the liberating stroke—and
blessed.

And whence that tribute ? wherefore
these regards ?

Not from the naked *Heart* alone of Man,
(Though claiming high distinction upon
earth

As the sole spring and fountain-head
of tears,

His own peculiar utterance for distress

Or gladness)—"No," the philosophic
Priest

Continued, "tis not in the vital seat
Of feeling to produce them, without aid
From the pure soul, the soul sublime and
pure ;

With her two faculties of eye and ear,
The one by which a creature, whom his
sins

Have rendered prone, can upward look
to heaven ;

The other that empowers him to perceive
The voice of Deity, on height and plain,
Whispering those truths in stillness, which
the WORD.

To the four quarters of the winds, pro-
claims.

Not without such assistance could the
use

Of these benign observance prevail :
Thus are they born, thus fostered, thus
maintained ;

And by the care prospective of our wise
Forefathers, who, to guard against the
shocks

The fluctuation and decay of things,
Embodied and established these high
truths

In solemn institutions :—men convinced
That life is love and immortality,
The being one, and one the element.

There lies the channel, and original bed,
From the beginning, hollowed out and
scooped

For Man's affections—else betrayed and
lost,

And swallowed up 'mid deserts infinite !
This is the genuine course, the aim, and
end

Of prescient reason ; all conclusions else
Are abject, vain, presumptuous, and
perverse.

The faith partaking of those holy times,
Life, I repeat, is energy of love

Divine or human ; exercised in pain,
In strife, and tribulation ; and ordained,

If so approved and sanctified to pass,
Through shades and silent rest, to endless
joy."

BOOK SIXTH

THE CHURCH-YARD AMONG THE MOUNTAINS

ARGUMENT

Pastor's Address to the State and Church of Eng-
land—The Pastor not inferior to the ancient
Worthies of the Church—He begins his Narra-
tives with an instance of unrequited Love—
Anguish of mind subdued, and how—The

lonely Miner—An instance of perseverance—
Which leads by contrast to an example of
abused talents, irresolution, and weakness—
Solitary, applying this covertly to his own
case, asks for an instance of some Strasser,
whose dispositions may have led him to end
his days here—Pastor, in answer, gives an
account of the harmonising influence of Soli-
tude upon two men of opposite principles,
who had encountered adversity in youth.

—The rule by which Peace may be obtained expressed, and where—Solitary hints at an overpowering Fatality—Answer of the Pastor—What subjects he will exclude from his Narratives—Conversation upon this—Instance of an unamiable character, a Female, and why given—Contrasted with this, a meek sufferer, from unguarded and betrayed love—Instance of heavier guilt, and its consequences to the Offender—With this instance of a Marriage Contract broken is contrasted one of a Widower, evidencing his faithful affection towards his deceased wife by his care of their female Children.

HAIL to the crown by Freedom shaped
—to gird
An English Sovereign's brow ! and to the throne
Whereon he sits, Whose deep foundations lie
In veneration and the people's love ;
Whose steps are equity, whose seat is law.
—Hail to the State of England ! And conjoin
With this salutation as devout,
Made to the spiritual fabric of her Church :
Founded in truth ; by blood of Martyrdom
Cemented ; by the hands of Wisdom reared
In beauty of holiness, with ordered pomp,
Decent and unreprieved. The voice, that greets
The majesty of both, shall pray for both :
That, mutually protected and sustained,
They may endure long as the sea's surroundings
This favoured Land, or sunshine warms her soil.

And O, ye swelling hills, and spacious plains !
Besprent from shore to shore with steeples,
And spires whose silent finger points to heaven ;
Nor wanting, at wide intervals, the bulk
Of ancient minster lifted above the cloud
Of the dense air, which town or city breeds
To intercept the sun's glad beams—may ne'er
That true succession fail of English hearts,
Who, with ancestral feeling, can perceive
What in those holy structures ye possess
Of ornamental interest, and the charm
Of pious sentiment diffused afar,
And human charity, and social love.
—Thus never shall the indignities of time
Approach their reverend graces, unopposed ;

Nor shall the elements be free to hurt
Their fair proportions ; nor the blinder rage
Of bigot zeal madly to overturn ;
And, if the desolating hand of war
Spare them, they shall continue to bestow,
Upon the thronged abodes of busy men
(Depraved, and ever prone to fill the mind
Exclusively with transitory things)
An air and mien of dignified pursuit ;
Of sweet civility, on rustic wilds.

The Poet, fostering for his native land
Such hope, entreats that servants may abound
Of those pure altars worthy ; ministers
Detached from pleasure, to the love of gain
Superior, insusceptible of pride,
And by ambitious longings undisturbed ;
Men, whose delight is where their duty leads
Or fixes them ; whose least distinguished day
Shines with some portion of that heavenly lustre
Which makes the sabbath lovely in the sight
Of blessed angels, pitying human cares.
—And, as on earth it is the doom of truth
To be perpetually attacked by foes
Open or covert, be that priesthood still,
For her defence, replenished with a band
Of strenuous champions, in scholastic arts
Thoroughly disciplined ; nor (if in course
Of the revolving world's disturbances
Cause should recur, which righteous Heaven avert !
To meet such trial) from their spiritual sires
Degenerate ; who, constrained to wield
The sword
Of disputation, shrunk not, though assailed
With hostile din, and combating in sight
Of angry umpires, partial and unjust ;
And did, thereafter, bathe their hands in fire,
So to declare the conscience satisfied ;
Nor for their bodies would accept release ;
But, blessing God and praising him, bequeathed
With their last breath, from out the smouldering flame,
The faith which they by diligence had earned,
Or, through illuminating grace, received,
For their dear countrymen, and all mankind.
O high example, constancy divine !

Even such a Man (inheriting the zeal
And from the sanctity of elder times
Not deviating,—a priest, the like of
whom,

If multiplied, and in their stations set,
Would o'er the bosom of a joyful land
Spread true religion and her genuine
fruits)

Before me stood that day; on holy
ground

Fraught with the relics of mortality,
Exalting tender themes, by just degrees
To lofty raised; and to the highest, last:
The head and mighty paramount of
truths,—

Immortal life, in never-fading worlds,
For mortal creatures, conquered and
secured.

That basis laid, those principles of
faith

Announced as a preparatory act
Of reverence done to the spirit of the
place,

The Pastor cast his eyes upon the ground;
Not, as before, like one oppressed with
awe,

But with a mild and social cheerfulness;
Then to the Solitary turned, and spake.

"At morn or eve, in your retired do-
main,

Perchance you not unfrequently have
marked

A Visitor—in quest of herbs and flowers;
Too delicate employ, as would appear,
For one, who, though of drooping mien,
had yet

From nature's kindness received a
frame

Robust as ever rural labour bred."

The Solitary answered: "Such a
Form

Full well I recollect. We often crossed
Each other's path; but, as the Intruder
seemed

Fondly to prize the silence which he kept,
And I as willingly did cherish mine,
We met, and passed, like shadows. I
have heard,

From my good Host, that being crazed in
brain

By unrequited love, he scaled the rocks,
Dived into caves, and pierced the matted
woods,

In hope to find some virtuous herb of
power

To cure his malady!"

The Vicar smiled,—
"Alas! before to-morrow's sun goes
down

His habitation will be here: for him

That open grave is destined."

"Died he then
Of pain and grief?" the Solitary asked,
"Do not believe it; never could that be!"

"He loved," the Vicar answered,
"deeply loved,

Loved fondly, truly, fervently; and
dared

At length to tell his love, but sued in
vain;

Rejected, yea repelled; and, if with
scorn

Upon the haughty maiden's brow, 'tis but
A high-prized plume which female

Beauty wears

In wantonness of conquest, or puts on
To cheat the world, or from herself to
hide

Humiliation, when no longer free.
That he could brook, and glory in;—but
when

The tidings came that she whom he had
wooed

Was wedded to another, and his heart
Was forced to rend away its only hope;

Then, Pity could have scarcely found on
earth

An object worthier of regard than he,
In the transition of that bigger hour!

Lost was she, lost; nor could the
Sufferer say

That in the act of preference he had been
Unjustly dealt with; but the Maid was
gone!

Had vanished from his prospects and de-
sires;

Not by translation to the heavenly choir
Who have put off their mortal spoils—
ah no!

She lives another's wishes to complete,—
'Joy be their lot, and happiness,' he
cried.

His lot and hers, 'as misery must be
mine!"

Such was that strong concussion; but
the Man,

Who trembled, trunk and limbs, like some
huge oak

By a fierce tempest shaken, soon resumed
The steadfast quiet natural to a mind

Of composition gentle and sedate,
And, in its movements, circumspect and
slow.

To books, and to the long-forsaken desk,
O'er which enchained by science he had
loved

To bend, he stoutly re-addressed himself,
Resolved to quell his pain, and search for
truth

With keener appetite (if that might be)
And closer industry. Of what ensued

Within the heart no outward sign ap-
 peared
 Till a betraying sickliness was seen
 To tinge his cheek ; and through his
 frame it crept
 With slow mutation unconcealable ;
 Such universal change as autumn makes
 In the fair body of a leafy grove
 Discoloured, then divested.

'Tis affirmed :
 By poets skilled in nature's secret ways
 That Love will not submit to be con-
 trolled

By mastery :—and the good Man lacked
 not friends
 Who strove to instil this truth into his
 mind,

A mind in all heart-mysteries unversed.
 'Go to the hills,' said one, 'remit a while
 This baneful diligence :—at early morn
 Court the fresh air, explore the heaths
 and woods ;

And, leaving it to others to foretell,
 By calculations sage, the ebb and flow
 Of tides, and when the moon will be
 eclipsed.

'Do you, for your own benefit, construct
 A calendar of flowers, plucked as they
 blow

'Where health abides, and cheerfulness,
 and peace.'

The attempt was made ;—'tis needless
 to report

How hopelessly : but innocence is strong,
 And an entire simplicity of mind

A thing most sacred in the eye of Heaven ;
 That opens for such sufferers, relief

Within the soul, fountains of grace
 divine ;

And doth commend their weakness and
 disease

To Nature's care, assisted in her office
 By all the elements, that round her wait

To generate, to preserve, and to restore ;
 And by her beautiful array of forms

Shedding sweet influence from above ;
 or pure.

'Delight exhaling from the ground they
 tread.'

"Impute it not to impatience, if,"
 exclaimed

The Wanderer, "I infer that he was
 healed

By perseverance in the course prescribed."

"You do not err : the powers, that
 had been lost

By slow degrees, were gradually regained ;
 The fluttering nerves composed ; the
 beating heart

In rest established ; and the jarring
 thoughts

To harmony restored.—But yon dark
 mould

Will cover him, in the fulness of his
 strength,

Hastily smitten by a fever's force ;
 Yet not with stroke so sudden as refused

Time to look back with tenderness on her
 Whom he had loved in passion ; and to

and
 Some farewell words—with one, but one,
 request :

That, from his dying hand, she would
 accept

Of his possessions that which most he
 prized ;

A book, upon whose leaves some chosen
 plants,

By his own hand disposed with nicest
 care,

In undecaying beauty were preserved ;
 Mute register, to him, of time and place,

And various fluctuations in the breast ;
 To her, a monument of faithful love

Conquered, and in tranquillity retained !

Close to his destined habitation, lies
 One who achieved a humbler victory,

Though marvellous in its kind. A place
 there is

High in these mountains, that allured
 a band

Of keen adventurers to unite their pains
 In search of precious ore ; they tried,

were foiled—
 And all desisted, all, save him alone.

He, taking counsel of his own clear
 thoughts,

And trusting only to his own weak hands,
 Urged unremittingly the stubborn work,

Unseconded, uncountenanced ; then, as
 time

Passed on, while still his lonely efforts
 found

No recompense, derided ; and at length,
 By many pitied, as insane of mind ;

By others dreaded as the luckless thrall
 Of subterranean Spirits feeding hope

By various mockery of sight and sound ;
 Hope after hope, encouraged and de-

stroyed.

—But when the lord of seasons had
 matured

The fruits of earth through space of
 twice ten years,

The mountain's entrails offered to his
 view

And trembling grasp the long-deferred
 reward.

Not with more transport did Columbus
 greet

A world, his rich discovery ! But our
 Swain,

A very hero till his point was gained,

Proved all unable to support the weight
Of prosperous fortune. On the fields he
looked

With an unsettled liberty of thought,
Wishes and endless schemes; by day-
light walked

Giddy and restless; ever and anon
Quailed in his gratitude immoderate
cups;

And truly might be said to die of joy!
He vanished; but conspicuous to this
day

The path remains that linked his cottage-
door

To the mine's mouth; a long and slant-
ing track,

Upon the rugged mountain's stony side,
Worn by his daily visits to and from
The darksome centre of a constant hope.
This vestige, neither force of beating
rain,

Nor the vicissitudes of frost and thaw
Shall cause to fade, till ages pass away;
And it is named, in memory of the event,
The PATH OF PERSEVERANCE."

"Thou from whom
Man has his strength," exclaimed the
Wanderer, "oh!

Do thou direct it! To the virtuous
grant

The penetrative eye which can perceive
In this blind world the guiding vein of
hope;

That, like this Labourer, such may dig
their way,

'Unshaken, unseduced, unterrified;'
Grant to the wise his firmness of resolve!"

"That prayer were not superfluous,"
said the Priest,

"Amid the noblest relics, proudest
dust,

That Westminster, for Britain's glory,
holds

Within the bosom of her awful pile,
Ambitiously collected. Yet the sigh,
Which wafts that prayer to heaven, is due
to all,

Wherever laid, who living fell below
Their virtue's humbler mark; a sigh of
pain

If to the opposite extreme they sank.
How would you pity her who yonder
rests;

Him, farther off; the pair, who here are
laid;

But, above all, that mixture of earth's
mould

Whom sight of this green hillock to my
mind

Recalls!

He lived not till his locks were
nipped

By seasonable frost of age; nor died
Before his temples, prematurely forced
To mix the manly brown with silver grey,
Gave obvious instance of the sad effect
Produced, when thoughtless Folly hath
usurped

The natural crown that sage Experience
wears.

Gay, volatile, ingenious, quick to learn,
And prompt to exhibit all that he pos-
sessed

Or could perform; a zealous actor, hired
Into the troop of mirth, a soldier, sworn
Into the lists of giddy enterprise—

Such was he; yet, as if within his frame
Two several souls alternately had lodged,
Two sets of manners could the Youth
put off;

And, fraught with antics as the Indian
bird

That writhes and chatters in her wicker cage,
Was graceful, when it pleased him, smooth
and still

As the mute swan that floats adown the
stream,"

Or, on the waters of the unruffled lake,
Anchors her placid beauty. Not a leaf,
That flutters on the bough, lighter than
he;

And not a flower, that droops in the green
shade,

More winningly reserved! If ye enquire
How such consummate elegance was bred
Amid these wilds, this answer may suffice;
'Twas Nature's will; who sometimes un-
dertakes,

For the reproof of human vanity,
Art to outstrip in her peculiar walk.

Hence, for this Favourite—lavishly en-
dowed

With personal gifts, and bright instinc-
tive wit,

While both, embellishing each other,
stood

Yet farther recommended by the charm
Of fine demeanour, and by dance and
song,

And skill in letters—every fancy shaped
Fair expectations; nor, when to the
world's

Capacious field forth went the Adven-
turer, there

Were he and his attainments overlooked,
Or scantily rewarded; but all hopes,

Cherished for him, he suffered to depart.
Like blighted buds; or clouds that
mimicked land

Before the sailor's eye, or diamond
drops

That sparkling decked the morning grass;
or aught

That was attractive, and hath ceased to
be!

Yet, when this Prodigal returned, the
 rites
 Of joyful greeting were on him bestowed,
 Who, by humiliation undeterred,
 Sought for his weariness a place of rest
 Within his Father's gates.—Whence came
 he?—clothed
 In tattered garb, from hovels where
 he abides
 Necessity, the stationary host
 Of vagrant poverty; from rifted barns
 Where no one dwells but the wide-staring
 owl
 And the owl's prey; from these bare
 haunts, to which
 He had descended from the proud saloon,
 He came, the ghost of beauty and of
 health,
 The wreck of gaiety! But soon revived
 In strength, in power refitted, he re-
 newed
 His suit to Fortune; and she smiled
 again
 Upon a fickle Ingrate. Thrice he rose,
 Thrice sank as willingly. For he—whose
 nerves
 Were used to thrill with pleasure, while
 his voice
 Softly accompanied the tuneful harp,
 By the nice finger of fair ladies touched
 In glittering halls—was able to derive
 No less enjoyment from an abject choice.
 Who happier for the moment—who more
 blithe
 Than this fallen Spirit? in those dreary
 holds
 His talents tending to exalt the freaks
 Of merry-making beggars,—now, pro-
 voked
 To laughter multiplied in louder peals
 By his malicious wit; then, all enchained
 With mute astonishment, themselves to
 see
 In their own arts outdone, their fame
 eclipsed,
 As by the very presence of the Fiend
 Who dictates and inspires illusive feats,
 For knavish purposes! The city, too,
 (With shame I speak it) to her guilty
 bowers
 Allured him, sunk so low in self-respect
 As there to linger, there to eat his bread,
 Hired minstrel of voluptuous blandish-
 ment;
 Charming the air with skill of hand or
 voice,
 Listen who would, be wrought upon who
 might,
 Sincerely wretched hearts, or falsely gay.
 —Such the too frequent tenour of his
 boast
 In ears that relished the report;—but all
 Was from his Parents happily concealed;

Who saw enough for blame and pitying
 love.
 They also were permitted to receive
 His last, repentant breath; and closed
 his eyes,
 No more to open on that firsome world
 Where he had long existed in the state
 Of a young fowl beneath one mother
 hatched,
 Though from another sprung, different in
 kind;
 Where he had lived, and could not cease
 to live,
 Distracted in propensity: content
 With neither element of good or ill;
 And yet in both rejoicing; man unblest;
 Of contradictions infinite the slave,
 Till his deliverance, when Mercy made
 him
 One with himself, and one with them that
 sleep."

"'Tis strange," observed the Solitary,
 "strange
 It seems, and scarcely less than pitiful,
 That in a land where charity provides
 For all that can no longer feed themselves,
 A man like this should choose to bring his
 shame
 To the parental door; and with his sighs
 Infect the air which he had freely breathed
 In happy infancy. He could not pine,
 Through lack of converse; no—he must
 have found
 Abundant exercise for thought and
 speech,
 In his individual being, self-reviewed,
 Self-catechised, self-punished.—Some
 there are
 Who, drawing near their final home, and
 much
 And daily longing that the same were
 reached,
 Would rather shun than seek the fellow-
 ship
 Of kindred mould.—Such haply here are
 laid?"

"Yes," said the Priest, "the Genius
 of our hills—
 Who seems, by these stupendous barriers
 cast
 Round his domain, desirous not alone
 To keep his own, but also to exclude
 All other progeny—doth sometimes lure,
 Even by his studied depth of privacy,
 The unhappy alien hoping to obtain
 Concealment, or seduced by wish to find,
 In place from outward molestation free,
 Helps to internal ease. Of many such
 Could I discourse; but as their stay was
 brief,
 So their departure only left behind

Fancies, and loose conjectures. Other
 trace
 Survives, for worthy mention, of a pair
 Who, from the pressure of their several
 fates,
 Meeting as strangers, in a petty town
 Whose blue roofs ornament a distant
 reach
 Of this far-winding yale, remained as
 friends
 True to their choice; and gave their
 bones in trust
 To this loved cemetery, here to lodge
 With unescutcheoned privacy interred
 Far from the family vault.—A Chieftain
 one
 By right of birth; within whose spotless
 breast
 The fire of ancient Caledonia burned:
 He, with the foremost whose impatience
 hailed
 The Stuart, landing to resume, by force
 Of arms, the crown which bigotry had lost,
 Aroused his clan; and, fighting at their
 head,
 With his brave sword endeavoured to pre-
 vent
 Culloden's fatal overthrow. Escaped
 From that disastrous rout, to foreign
 shores
 He fled; and when the lenient hand of
 time
 Those troubles had appeased, he sought
 and gained,
 For his obscured condition, an obscure
 Retreat, within this nook of English
 ground.

The other, born in Britain's southern
 tract,
 Had fixed his milder loyalty, and placed
 His gentler sentiments of love and hate,
 There, where they placed them who in con-
 science prized
 The new succession, as a line of kings.
 Whose oath had virtue to protect the
 land
 Against the dire assaults of papacy
 And arbitrary rule. But launch thy
 bark
 On the distempered flood of public life,
 And cause for most rare triumph will be
 thine
 If, spite of keenest eye and steadiest
 hand,
 The stream, that bears thee forward,
 prove not, soon
 Or late, a perilous master. He—who
 oft,
 Beneath the battlements and stately
 trees
 That round his mansion cast a sober
 gloom,

Had moralised on this, and other truths
 Of kindred import, pleased and satis-
 fied—

Was forced to vent his wisdom with a
 sigh
 Heaved from the heart in fortune's
 bitterness,
 When he had crushed a plentiful estate
 By ruinous contest, to obtain a seat
 In Britain's senate. Fruitless was the
 attempt:

And while the reproar of that desperate
 strife

Continued yet to vibrate on his ear,
 The vanquished Whig, under a borrowed
 name,

(For the mere sound and echo of his own
 Haunted him with sensations of disgust
 That he was glad to lose) slunk from the
 world

To the deep shade of those untravelled
 Wilds;

In which the Scottish Laird had long
 possessed

An undisturbed abode. Here, then, they
 met,

Two doughty champions; flaming Jacob-
 bite

And sullen Hanoverian! You might
 think

That losses and vexations, less severe
 Than those which they had severally
 sustained,

Would have inclined each to abate his
 zeal

For his ungrateful cause; no,—I have
 heard

My reverend Father tell that, 'mid the
 calm

Of that small town encountering thus,
 they filled,

Daily, its bowling green with harmless
 strife;

Plagued with uncharitable thoughts the
 church;

And vexed the market-place. But in the
 breasts

Of these opponents gradually was
 wrought,

With little change of general sentiment,
 Such leaning towards each other, that

their days
 By choice were spent in constant fellow-
 ship;

And if, at times, they fretted with the
 yoke,

Those very bickerings made them love it
 more.

A favourite boundary to their length-
 ened walks

This Church-yard was. And, whether
 they had come

Treading their path in sympathy and linked

In social converse, or by some short space

Discreetly parted to preserve the peace,
One spirit seldom failed to extend its sway

Over both minds, when they awhile had marked

The visible quiet of this holy ground,
And breathed its soothing air:—the

spirit of hope
And saintly magnanimity; that—spurning

The field of selfish difference and dispute,
And every care which transitory things,
Earth and the kingdoms of the earth,
create—

Doth, by a rapture of forgetfulness,
Preclude forgiveness, from the praise
debarred,

Which else the Christian virtue might
have claimed.

• There live who yet remember here to
have seen

Their courtly figures, seated on the
stump

Of an old yew, their favourite resting-
place.

• But as the remnant of the long-lived
tree

Was disappearing by a swift decay,
They, with joint care, determined to
erect,

Upon its site, a dial, that might stand
For public use preserved, and thus sur-
vive

As their own private monument: for
this

Was the particular spot, in which they
wished

(And Heaven was pleased to accomplish
the desire)

• That, undivided, their remains should lie.
So, where the mouldered tree had stood,

was raised
Yon structure, framing, with the ascent
of steps

That to the decorated pillar lead,
A work of art more sumptuous than

might seem
To suit this place; yet built in no proud
scorn

Of rustic homeliness; they only aimed
To ensure for it respectful guardianship.

Around the margin of the plate, whereon
The shadow falls to note the stealthy
hours,

Winds an inscriptive legend."—At these
words

Thither we turned; and gathered, as we
read,

The appropriate sense, in Latin numbers
couched:

*'Time flies; it is his melancholy task
To bring, and bear away, delusive hopes,
And re-produce the troubles he destroys.
But, while his blindness thus is occupied,
Discerning Mortal! do thou serve the will
Of Time's eternal Master, and that peace,
Which the world wants, shall be for thee
confirmed!'*

"Smooth verse, inspired by no un-
lettered Muse,"

Exclaimed the Sceptic, "and the strain
of thought

Accords with nature's language;—the
soft voice

Of yon white torrent falling down the
rocks

Speaks, less distinctly, to the same
effect.

If, then, their blended influence be not
lost

Upon our hearts, not wholly lost, I
grant,

Even upon mine, the more are we re-
quired

To feel for those among our fellow-men,
Who, offering no obedience to the world,

Are yet made desperate by 'too quick
a sense

Of constant infelicity,' cut off
From peace like exiles on some barren
rock,

Their life's appointed prison; not more
free

Than sentinels, between two armies, set,
With nothing better, in the chill night
air,

Than their own thoughts to comfort
them. Say why

That ancient story of Prometheus
chained

To the bare rock, on frozen Caucasus;
The vulture, the inexhaustible repast

Drawn from his vitals? Say what
meant the woes

By Tantalus entailed upon his race,
And the dark sorrows of the line of
Thebes?

Fictions in form, but in their substance
truths,

Tremendous truths! familiar to the men
Of long-past times, nor obsolete in ours.

Exchange the shepherd's frock of native
grey

For robes with regal purple tinged; con-
vert

The crook into a sceptre: give the pomp
Of circumstance; and here the tragic
Muse

Shall find apt subjects for her highest
art.

Amid the groves, under the shadowy
hills,
The generations are prepared: the
pangs,
The internal pangs, are ready; the dread
strife
Of poor humanity's afflicted will
Struggling in vain with ruthless destiny."

"Though," said the Priest in answer,
"these be terms

Which a divine philosophy rejects,
We, whose established and unflinching
trust

Is in controlling Providence, admit
That, through all stations, human life
abounds

With mysteries;—for, if Faith were left
untried,

How could the might, that lurks within
her, then

Be shown? her glorious excellence—that
ranks

Among the first of Powers and Virtues—
proved?

Our system is not fashioned to preclude
That sympathy which you for others
ask;

And I could tell, not travelling for my
theme

Beyond these humble graves, of grievous
crimes

And strange disasters; but I pass them
by,

Loth to disturb what Heaven hath
hushed in peace.

—Still less, far less, am I inclined to treat
Of Man degraded in his Maker's sight

By the deformities of brutish vice:
For, in such portraits, though a vulgar
face

And a coarse outside of repulsive life
And unassuming manners might at once

Be recognised by all—"At! do not
think,"

The Wanderer somewhat eagerly ex-
claimed,

"Wish could be ours that you, for such
poor gain,

(Gain shall I call it?—gain of what?—
for whom?)

Should breathe a word tending to violate
Your own pure spirit. Not a step we
look for

In slight of that forbearance and reserve
Which common human-heartedness in-
spires,

And mortal ignorance and frailty claim,
Upon this sacred ground, if nowhere
else.

"True," said the Solitary, "be it far
From us to infringe the laws of charity,

Let judgment here in mercy be pro-
nounced;

This, self-respecting Nature prompts,
and this

Wisdom enjoins: but if the thing we seek
Be genuine knowledge, bear we then in
mind

How, from his lofty throne, the sun can
fling

Colours as bright on exhalations bred
By ecreedy pool or pestilential swamp,

As by the rivulet sparkling where it runs,
Or the pellucid lake."

"Small risk," said I,
"Of such illusion do we here incur;

Temptation here is none to exceed the
truth: "

No evidence appears that they who rest
Within this ground, were covetous of
praise,

Or of remembrance ever deserved or not.
Green is the Church-yard, beautiful and
green,

Ridge rising gently by the side of ridge,
A heaving surface, almost wholly free

From interruption of sepulchral stones,
And mantled o'er with aboriginal turf

And everlasting flowers. These Dale-
men trust

The lingering gleam of their departed lives
To oral record, and the silent heart;

Depositories faithful and more kind
Than fondest epitaph: for, if those fail,

What boots the sculptured tomb? And
who can blame,

Who rather would not envy, men that
feel

This mutual confidence; if, from such
source,

The practice flow,—if thence, or from a
deep

And general humility in death?
Nor should I much condemn it, if it
spring

From disregard of time's destructive
power,

As only capable to prey on things
Of earth, and human nature's mortal
part.

"Yet—in less simple districts, where we
see

Stone lift its forehead emulous of stone
In courting notice; and the ground all
paved

With commendations of departed worth;
Reading, wherever we turn, of innocent
lives,

Of each domestic charity fulfilled,
And sufferings meekly borne—", for my
part,

Though with the silence pleased that
here prevails.

Among those fair recitals also range,
Soothed by the natural spirit which they
breathe.

And, in the centre of a world whose soil
Is rank with all unkindness, compassed
round

With such memorials, I have sometimes
felt,

It was no momentary happiness
To have one Enclosure where the voice
that speaks

In envy or detraction is not heard;
Which malice may not enter; where the
traces

Of evil inclinations are unknown;
Where, love and pity tenderly unite
With resignation; and no jarring tone
Intrudes, the peaceful concert to disturb
Of amity and gratitude."

"Thus sanctioned,"
The Pastor said, "I willingly confide
My narratives to subjects that excite
Feelings with these accordant; love,
esteem,

And admiration; lifting up a veil,
A sunbeam introducing among hearts
Retired and covert; so that ye shall have
Clear images before your gladdened eyes
Of nature's unambitious underwood,
And flowers that prosper in the shade.

And when
I speak of such among my flock as
swerved

Or fell, those only shall be singled out
Upon whose lapse, or error, something
more

Than brotherly forgiveness may attend;
To such will we restrict our notice, else
Better my tongue were mute.

And yet there are,
I feel, good reasons why we should not
leave

Wholly untraced a more forbidding way.
For, strength to persevere and to sup-
port,

And energy to conquer and repel—
These elements of virtue, that declare
The native grandeur of the human soul—
Are oft-times not unprofitably shown
In the perverseness of a selfish course:
Truth every day exemplified, no less
In the grey cottage by the murmuring
stream

Than in fantastic conqueror's roving
camps,

Or 'mid the factious senate unappalled
Who'er may sink, or rise—to sink again,
As merciless proscription ebbs and flows.

There," said the Vicar, pointing as he
spoke,

A woman rests in peace; surpassed by
few

In power of mind, and eloquent dis-
course.

Tall was her stature; her complexion dark
And saturnine; her head not raised to
hold

Converse with heaven, nor yet deprest
towards earth,

But in projection carried, as she walked
For ever musing. Sunken were her
eyes;

Wrinkled and furrowed with habitual
thought

Was her broad forehead; like the brow of
one

Whose visual nerve shrinks from a pain-
ful glare

Of overpowering light.—While yet a
child,

She, 'mid the humble flowerets of the vale,
Towered like the imperial thistle, not
unfurnished

With its appropriate grace, yet rather
seeking

To be admired, than coveted and loved.
Even at that age she ruled, a sovereign
queen,

Over her comrades; else their simple
sports,

Wanting all relish for her strenuous mind,
Had crossed her only to be shunned with
scorn.

—Oh! pang of sorrowful regret for those
Whom, in their youth, sweet study has
enthralled,

That they have lived for harsher servi-
tude.

Whether in soul, in body, or estate!
Such doom was hers; yet nothing could
subdue

Her keen desire of knowledge, nor efface
Those brighter images by books imprest
Upon her memory, faithfully as stars
That occupy their places, and, though oft
Hidden by clouds, and oft bedimmed by
haze,

Are not to be extinguished, nor impaired.

Two passions, both degenerate, for
they both

Began in honour, gradually obtained
Rule over her, and vexed her daily life;

An unremitting, avaricious thirst;
And a strange thralldom of maternal love,

That held her spirit, in its own despite,
Bound—by vexation, and regret, and
scorn,

Constrained forgiveness, and relenting
vows,

And tears, in pride suppressed, in shame
concealed—

To a poor dissolute Son, her only child.

—Her wedded days had opened with
mishap,

Whence dire dependence. What could
 she perform
 To shake the burthen off? Ah! there
 was felt,
 Indignantly, the weakness of her sex.
 She mused, resolved, adhered to her re-
 solve;
 The hand grew slack in alms-giving, the
 heart
 Closed by degrees to charity; heaven's
 blessing
 Not seeking from that source, she placed
 her trust
 In ceaseless pains—and strictest parsimony
 Which sternly hoarded all that could be
 spared,
 From each day's need, out of each day's
 least gain.

Thus all was re-established, and a pile
 Constructed, that sufficed for every end,
 Save the contentment of the builder's
 mind;

A mind by nature indisposed to aught
 So placid, so inactive, as content;
 A mind intolerant of lasting peace,
 And cherishing the pang her heart de-
 plored.

Dread life of conflict! which I oft com-
 pared

To the agitation of a brook that runs
 Down a rocky mountain, buried now and
 lost

In silent pools, now in strong eddies
 chained;

But never to be charmed to gentleness:
 Its best attainment fits of such repose
 As timid eyes might shrink from fathom-
 ing.

A sudden illness seized her in the
 strength

Of life's autumnal season.—Shall I tell
 How on her bed of death the Matron lay,
 To Providence submissive, so she thought,
 But fretted, vexed, and wrought upon,
 almost

To anger, by the malady that griped
 Her prostrate frame with unrelaxing
 power,

As the fierce eagle fastens on the lamb?
 She prayed, she moaned;—her hus-
 band's sister watched

Her dreary pillow, waited on her needs;
 And yet the very sound of that kind foot
 Was anguish to her ears! 'And must
 she rule,'

This was the death-doomed Woman
 heard to say

In bitterness, 'and must she rule and
 reign,

'Sole Mistress of this house, when I am
 gone?

'Tend what I tended, calling it her own!
 Enough;—I fear, too much.—One ver-
 nal evening,

While she was yet in prime of health and
 strength,

I well remember, while I passed her door
 Alone, with loitering step, and upward
 eye

Turned towards the planet Jupiter, that
 hung

Above the centre of the Vale, a voice
 Roused me, her voice; it said, 'That
 glorious star

'In its untroubled element will shine
 As now it shines, when we are laid in
 earth

'And safe from all our sorrows.' With a
 sigh

She spake, yet, I believe, not unsustained
 By faith in glory that shall far transcend
 Aught by these perishable heavens dis-
 closed

To sight or mind. Nor less than care
 divine

Is divine mercy. She, who had rebelled,
 Was into meekness softened and subdued;

Did, after trials not in vain prolonged,
 With resignation sink into the grave;

And her uncharitable acts, I trust,
 And harsh unkindnesses are all forgiven,

Tho', in this Vale, remembered with deep
 awe."

THE Vicar paused; and toward a seat
 advanced,

A long stone-seat, fixed in the Church-
 yard wall:

Part shaded by cool sycamore, and part
 Offering a sunny resting-place to them

Who seek the House of worship, while the
 bells

Yet ring with all their voices, or before
 The last hath ceased its solitary knoll.

Beneath the shade we all sate down; and
 there

His office, uninvited, he resumed.

"As on a sunny bank, a tender lamb
 Lurks in safe shelter from the winds of
 March,

Screened by its parent, so that little
 moun-
 d

Lies guarded by its neighbour; the small
 heap

Speaks for itself; an Infant there doth
 rest;

The sheltering hillock is the Mother's
 grave.

If mild discourse, and manners that con-
 ferred

A natural dignity on humblest rank;
 If gladsome spirits, and benignant looks,

That for a face not beautiful did more

Than beauty for the fairest face can do ;
And if religious tenderness of heart,
Grieving for sin, and penitential tears
Shed when the clouds had gathered and
distained
The spotless ether of a maiden life ;
If these may make a hallowed spot of
earth
More holy in the sight of God or Man ;
Then, o'er that mould, a sanctity shall
brood
Till the stars sicken at the day of doom.

Ah ! what a warning for a thoughtless
man,
Could field or grove, could any spot of
earth,
Show to his eye an image of the pangs
Which it hath witnessed ; render back an
echo
Of the sad steps by which it hath been
trod !
There, by her innocent Baby's precious
grave,
And on the very turf that roofs her own,
The Mother oft was seen to stand, or
kneel

In the broad day, a weeping Magdalene.
Now she is not : the swelling turf reports
Of the fresh shower, but of poor Ellen's
tears

Is silent ; not is any vestige left
Of the path worn by mournful tread of her
Who, at her heart's light bidding, once
had moved

In virgin fearlessness, with step that
seemed
Caught from the pressure of elastic turf
Upon the mountains gemmed with
morning dew.

In the prime hour of sweetest scents and
airs.
—Serious and thoughtful was her mind ;
and yet,

By reconciliation exquisite and rare,
The form, port, motions, of this Cottage-
girl

Were such as might have quickened and
inspired

A Titian's hand, address to picture forth
Oread or Dryad glancing through the
shade

What time the hunter's earliest horn is
heard

Starting the golden hills.

A wide-spread elm
Stands in our valley, named THE JOYFUL
TREE ;

From dateless usage which our peasants
hold

Of giving welcome to the first of May
By dances round its trunk.—And if the
sky

W.P.

Permit, like honours, dance and song, are
paid

To the Twelfth Night, beneath the frosty
stars

Or the clear moon. The queen of these
gay sports,

If not in beauty yet in sprightly air,
Was hapless Ellen.—No one touched the
ground

So deftly, and the nicest maiden's locks
Less gracefully were braided ;—but this
praise,

Metinks, would better suit another
place.

She loved, and fondly deemed herself
beloved.

—The road is dim, the current unper-
ceived,

The weakness painful and most pitiful,
By which a virtuous woman, in pure
youth,

May be delivered to distress and shame.
Such fate was hers.—The last time Ellen
danced,

Among her equals, round THE JOYFUL
TREE,

She bore a secret burthen ; and full soon
Was left to tremble for a breaking vow,—
Then, to bewail a sternly-broken vow.

Alone, within her widowed Mother's
house.

It was the season of unfolding leaves,
Of days advancing toward their utmost
length.

And small birds singing happily to mates
Happy as they. With spirit-saddening
power

Winds pipe through fading woods ; but
those blithe notes

Strike the deserted to the heart : I speak
Of what I know, and what we feel within.

—Beside the cottage in which Ellen
dwelt

Stands a tall ash-tree ; to whose topmost
twig

A thrush resorts, and annually chants,
At morn and evening from that naked
perch,

While all the undergrove is thick with
leaves.

A time-beguiling ditty, for delight
Of his fond partner, silent in the nest.

—'Ah why,' said Ellen, sighing to herself,
'Why do not words, and kiss, and
solemn pledge ;

'And nature that is kind in woman's
breast,

'And reason that in man is wise and good,
'And fear of him who is a righteous
judge ;

'Why do not these prevail for human
life,

'To keep two hearts together, that began
 'Their spring-time with one love, and
 that have need
 'Of mutual pity and forgiveness, sweet
 'To grant, or be received; while that poor
 bird—
 'O come and hear him! Thou who hast
 to me
 'Been faithless, hear him, though a lowly
 creature,
 'One of God's simple children that yet
 know not
 'The universal Parent, how he sings
 'As if he wished the firmament of
 heaven
 'Should listen, and give back to him the
 voice
 'Of his triumphant constancy and love;
 'The proclamation that he makes, how
 far
 'His darkness doth transcend our fickle
 light!

Such was the tender passage, not by
 me
 Repeated without loss of simple phrase,
 Which I perused, even as the words had
 been
 Committed by forsaken Ellen's hand
 To the blank margin of a Valentine,
 Bedropped with tears. 'Twill please you
 to be told
 That, studiously withdrawing from the
 eye
 Of all companionship, the Sufferer yet
 In lonely reading found a meek resource:
 How thankful for the warmth of summer
 days,
 When she could slip into the cottage-barn,
 And find a secret oratory there;
 Or, in the garden, under friendly veil
 Of their long twilight, pore upon her book
 By the last lingering help of the open sky
 Until dark night dismissed her to her bed!
 Thus did a waking fancy sometimes lose
 The unconquerable pang of despised love.

A kindlier passion opened on her soul
 When that poor Child was born. Upon
 its face
 She gazed as on a pure and spotless gift
 Of unexpected promise, where a grief
 Or dread was all that had been thought
 of,—joy
 Far livelier than bewildered traveller
 feels,
 Amid a perilous waste that all night long
 Hath harassed him toiling through fear-
 ful storm,
 When he beholds the first pale speck
 serene
 Of day-spring, in the gloomy east, re-
 vealed,

And greets it with thanksgiving. 'Till
 this hour,
 Thus, in her Mother's hearing Ellen spake,
 'There was a stony region in my heart;
 'But He, at whose command the parched
 rock
 'Was smitten, and poured forth a quench-
 ing stream;
 'Hath softened that obduracy, and made
 'Unlooked-for gladness in the desert
 place,
 'To save the perishing; and, henceforth,
 I breathe
 'The air with cheerful spirit, for thy sake
 'My infant! and for that good Mother
 dear,
 'Who bore me, and hath prayed for me
 in vain!—
 'Yet not in vain; it shall not be in vain.
 She spake, nor was the assurance unful-
 filled;
 And if heart-rending thoughts would oft
 return,
 They stayed not long.—The blameless
 Infant grew;
 The Child whom Ellen and her Mother
 loved
 They soon were proud of; tended it and
 nursed;
 A soothing comforter, although forlorn;
 Like a poor singing-bird from distant
 lands;
 Or a choice shrub, which he, who passes
 by
 With vacant mind, not seldom may ob-
 serve
 Fair-flowering in a thinly-peopled house,
 Whose window, somewhat sadly, it
 adorns.

Through four months' space the Infant
 drew its food
 From the maternal breast; then scruples
 rose;
 'Thoughts, which the rich are free from,
 came and crossed
 The fond affection. She no more could
 bear
 By her offence to lay a twofold weight
 On a kind parent willing to forget
 Their slender means: so, to that parent's
 care
 Trusting her child, she left their common
 home,
 And undertook with dutiful content
 A Foster-mother's office.

'Tis, perchance,
 Unknown to you that in these simple
 vales
 The natural feeling of equality
 Is by domestic service unimpaired;
 Yet, though such service be, with us,
 removed

From sense of degradation, not the less
The ungentle mind can easily find means
To impose severe restraints and laws un-
just,

Which hapless Ellen now was doomed to
feel :

For (blinded by an over-anxious dread
Of such excitement and divided thought
As with her office would but ill accord)
This pair, whose infant she was bound to
nurse,

Forbad her all communion with her own ;
Week after week, the mandate they en-
forced.

—So near ! yet not allowed, upon that
sight

To fix her eyes—alas ! 'twas hard to bear !
But worse affliction must be borne—far
worse :

For 'tis Heaven's will—that, after a
disease

Began and ended within three days'
space,

Her child, should die ; as Ellen now
exclaimed,

Her own—deserted child !—Once, only
once,

She saw it in that mortal malady ;
And, on the burial-day, could scarcely
gain

• Permission to attend its obsequies.
She reached the house, last of the funeral
train :

And some one, as she entered, having
chanced

To urge unthinkingly their prompt de-
parture,

'Nay,' said she, with commanding look,
a spirit

Of anger never seen in her before,
'Nay, ye must wait my time !' and down
she sat,

And by the unclosed coffin kept her seat
Weeping and looking, looking on and
weeping,

Upon the last sweet slumber of her Child,
Until at length her soul was satisfied.

• You see the Infant's Grave ; and to
this spot,

The Mother, oft as she was sent abroad,
On whatsoever errand, urged her steps :

• Hither she came ; here stood, and some-
times knelt

In the broad day, a rueful Magdalene !
So call her ; for not only she bewailed

A mother's loss, but mourned in bitter-
ness

Her own transgression ; penitent sincere
As ever raised to heaven a streaming
eye !

—At length the parents of the foster-
child,

Noting that in despite of their commands
She still renewed and could not but re-
new

Those visitations, ceased to send her
forth ;

Or, to the garden's narrow bounds,
confined.

I failed not to remind them that they
erred ;

For holy Nature might not thus be
crossed.

Thus wronged in woman's breast : in vain
I pleaded—

But the green stalk of Ellen's life was
snapped,

And the flower drooped ; as every eye
could see,

It hung its head in mortal languishment.
—Aided by this appearance, I at length

Prevailed ; and, from those bonds re-
leased, she went

Home to her mother's house.
The Youth was fled ;

The rash betrayer could not face the
shame

Or sorrow which his senseless guilt had
caused ;

And little would his presence, or proof
given

Of a relenting soul, have now availed ;
For, like a shadow, he was passed away

From Ellen's thoughts ; had perished to
her mind

For all concerns of fear, or hope, or love,
Save only those which to their common
shame,

And to his moral being appertained :
Hope from that quarter would, I know,
have brought

A heavenly comfort ; there she recognised
An unrelaxing bond, a mutual need ;

There, and, as seemed, there only.

She had built,
Her fond maternal heart had built, a nest
In blindness all too near the river's edge ;

That work a summer flood with hasty
swell

Had swept away ; and now her Spirit
longed

For its last flight to heaven's security.
—The bodily frame wasted from day to
day ;

Meanwhile, relinquishing all other cares,
Her mind she strictly tutored to find
peace

And pleasure in endurance. Much she
thought,

And much she read ; and brooded feel-
ingly

Upon her own unworthiness. To me,
As to a spiritual comforter and friend,

Her heart she opened ; and no palms were
spared

To mitigate, as gently as I could,
The sting of self-reproach, with healing
words.

Meek Saint ! through patience glorified on
earth !

In whom, as by her lonely hearth she sate,
The ghastly face of cold decay put on
A sun-like beauty, and appeared divine !
May I not mention—that, within those
walls,

In due observance of her pious wish.
The congregation joined with me in
prayer

For her soul's good ? Nor was that
office vain.

—Much did she suffer : but, if any friend,
Beholding her condition, at the sight
Gave way to words of pity or complaint.
She stilled them with a prompt reproof,
and said,

'He who afflicts me knows what I can
bear ;

'And, when I fail, and can endure no more,
'Will mercifully take me to himself.'

So, through the cloud of death, her Spirit
passed

Into that pure and unknown world of love
Where injury cannot come :—and here
is laid
The mortal Body by her Infant's side."

The Vicar ceased ; and downcast looks
made known

That each had listened with his inmost
heart.

For me, the emotion scarcely was less
strong

Or less benign than that which I had felt
When seated near my venerable Friend.
Under those shady elms, from him I heard
The story that retraced the slow decline
Of Margaret, sinking on the lonely heath
With the neglected house to which she
clung.

—I noted that the Solitary's cheek
Confessed the power of nature.—Pleased
though sad,

More pleased than sad, the grey-haired
Wanderer sate ;

Thanks to his pure imaginative soul
Capacious and serene ; his blameless
life,

His knowledge, wisdom, love of truth,
and love

Of human kind ! He was it who first
broke

The pensive silence, saying :—

"Blest are they
Whose sorrow rather is to suffer wrong
Than to do wrong, albeit themselves have
erred.

This tale gives proof that Heaven most
gently deals

With such, in their affliction.—Ellen's
fate,

Her tender spirit, and her contrite heart,
Call to my mind dark hints which I have
heard

Of one who died, within this vale, by
deem

Heavier, as his offence was heavier far.
Where, Sir, I pray you, where are laid the
bones

Of Wilfred Armathwaite ? "

The Vicar answered,
"In that green nook, close by the Church-
yard wall,

Beneath you hawthorn, planted by myself
In memory and for warning, and in sign
Of sweetness where dire anguish had been
known,

Of reconciliation after deep offence—
There doth he rest. No theme his fate
supplies

For the smooth glossings of the indulgent
world ;

Nor need the windings of his devious
course

Be here retracted :—enough that, by mis-
hap

And venial error, robbed of competence,
And her obsequious shadow, peace of
mind,

He craved a substitute in troubled joy ;
Against his conscience rose in arms, and,
braving

Divine displeasure, broke the marriage-
vow.

That which he had been weak enough to
do

Was misery in remembrance ; he was
stung,

Stung by his inward thoughts, and by the
smiles

Of wife and children stung to agony.
Wretched at home, he gained no peace
abroad ;

Ranged through the mountains, slept
upon the earth,

Asked comfort of the open air, and found
No quiet in the darkness of the night,
No pleasure in the beauty of the day.

His flock he slighted : his paternal fields
Became a clog to him, whose spirit wished
To fly—but whither ! And this gracious
Church,

That wears a look so full of peace and hope
And love, benignant mother of the vale,
How fair amid her brood of cottages !

She was to him a sickness and reproach.
Much to the last remained unknown : but
this

Is sure, that through remorse and grief
he died ;

Though pitted among men, absolved by
God.

He could not find forgiveness in himself ;
Nor could endure the weight of his own
shame.

Here rests a Mother. But from her I
turn

And from her grave.—Behold—upon
that ridge,

That, stretching boldly from the moun-
tain side,

Carries into the centre of the vale
Its rocks and woods—the Co. agg where
she dwelt ;

And where yet dwells her faithful Partner,
left

(Full eight years past) the solitary prop
Of many helpless Children. I begin

With words that might be prelude to a
tale

Of sorrow and dejection ; but I feel
No sadness, when I think of what mine

eyes
See daily in that happy family.

—Bright gaillard form they for the pen-
sive brow

Of their اندروoping Father's widowhood,
Those six fair Daughters, budding yet—

not one,
Not one of all the band, a full-blown
flower.

Deprest, and desolate of soul, as once
That Father was, and filled with anxious

fear,
Now, by experience taught, he stands
assured,

That God, who takes away, yet takes not
half

Of what he seems to take ; or gives it
back,

Not to our prayer, but far beyond our
prayer ;

He gives it—the boon produce of a soil
Which our endeavours have refused to

till,
And hope hath never watered. The

Abode,
Whose grateful owner can attest these

truths,
Even were the object nearer to our sight,
Would seem in no distinction to surpass

The rudest habitations. Ye might think
That it had sprung self-raised from earth,

or grown
Out of the living rock, to be adorned
By nature only ; but, if thither led,

Ye would discover, then, a studious work
Of many fancies, prompting many hands.

Brought from the woods the honey-
suckle twines

Around the porch, and seems, in that trim
place,

A plant no longer wild ; the cultured rose

There, blossoms, strong in health, and
will be soon

Roof-high ; the wild pink crowns the
garden-wall,

And with the flowers are intermingled
stones

Sparry and bright, rough scatterings of
the hills. [year,

These ornaments, that fade not with the
A hardy Girl continues to provide ;

Who, mounting fearlessly the rocky
heights, [him,

Her Father's prompt attendant, does for
All that a boy could do, but with delight

More keen and prouder daring ; yet hath
she,

Within the garden, like the rest, a bed
For her own flowers and favourite herbs,

a space,
By sacred charter, holden for her use.

—These, and whatever else the garden
bears [not,

Of fruit or flower, permission asked or
I freely gather ; and my leisure draws

A not unfrequent pastime from the hum
Of bees around their range of sheltered
hives

Busy in that enclosure ; while the rill,
That sparkling thrids the rocks, attunes

his voice
To the pure course of human life which

there
Flows on in solitude. But, when the
gloom

Of night is falling round my steps, then
most

This Dwelling charms me ; often I stop
short,

(Who could refrain ?) and feed by stealth
my sight

With prospect of the company within,
Laid open through the blazing window :

—there
I see the eldest Daughter at her wheel

Spinning amain, as if to overtake
The never-halting time ; or, in her turn,

Teaching some Novice of the sisterhood
That skill in this or other household work,

Which, from her Father's honoured
hand, herself,

While she was yet a little-one, had
learned.

Mild Man ! he is not gay, but they are
gay

And the whole house seems filled with
gaiety.

—Thrice happy, then, the Mother may
be deemed,

The Wife, from whose consolatory grave
I turned, that ye in mind might witness

where,
And how, her Spirit yet survives on
earth ! "

BOOK SEVENTH

THE CHURCH-YARD AMONG THE MOUNTAINS

CONTINUED

ARGUMENT

Impression of these Narratives upon the Author's mind—Pastor invited to give account of certain Graves that lie apart—Clergyman and his Family—Fortunate influence of change of situation—Activity in extreme old age—Another Clergyman, a character of resolute Virtue—Lamentations over mis-directed applause—Instance of less exalted excellence in a deaf man—Elevated character of a blind man—Reflection upon Blindness—Interrupted by a Peasant who passes—his animal cheerfulness and careless vivacity—He occasions a digression on the fall of beautiful and interesting Trees—A female Infant's Grave—Joy at her Birth—Sorrow at her Departure—A youthful Peasant—his patriotic enthusiasm and distinguished qualities—his untimely death—Exultation of the Wanderer, as a patriot, in this Picture—Solitary how affected—Monument of a Knight—Traditions concerning him—Peroration of the Wanderer on the transitoriness of things and the revolutions of society—Hints at his own past Calling—Thanks the Pastor.

WHILE thus from theme to theme the
Historian passed,
The words he uttered, and the scene that
lay
Before our eyes, awakened in my mind
Vivid remembrance of those long-past
hours ;
When, in the hollow of some shadowy
vale,
(What time the splendour of the setting
sun
Lay beautiful on Snowdon's sovereign
brow,
On Cader Idris, or huge Penmanmaur)
A wandering Youth, I listened with de-
light
To pastoral melody or warlike air,
Drawn from the chords of the ancient
British harp
By some accomplished Master, while
he sate
Amid the quiet of the green recess,
And there did inexhaustibly dispense
An interchange of soft or solemn tunes,
Tender or blithe ; now, as the varying
mood
Of his own spirit urged,—now, as a voice
From youth or maiden, or some honoured
chief
Of his compatriot villagers (that hung
Around him, drinking in the impassioned
notes

Of the time-hallowed minstrelsy) required
For their heart's ease or pleasure. Strains
of power

Were they, to seize and occupy the sense ;
But to a higher mark than song can reach
Rose this pure eloquence. And, when
the stream

Which, overflowed the soul was passed
away.

A consciousness remained that it had left,
Deposited upon the silent shore
Of memory, images and precious thoughts,
That 'shall not die, and cannot be de-
stroyed.

"These grassy heaps lie amicably
close."

Said I, "like surges heaving in the wind
Along the surface of a mountain pool :
Whence comes it, then, that yonder we
behold

Five graves, and only five, that rise to-
gether

Unsociably sequestered, and encroach-
ing

On the smooth play-ground of the village-
school ?"

The Vicar answered,—“No disdainful
pride

In them who rest beneath, nor any course
Of strange or tragic accident, hath helped
To place those hillocks in that lonely
guise.

—Once more look forth, and follow with
your sight

The length of road that from yon moun-
tain's base

Through bare enclosures stretches, 'till
its line

Is lost within a little tuft of trees ;

Then, reappearing in a moment, quits
The cultured fields ; and up the heathy
waste,

Mounts, as you see, in mazes serpentine,
Led towards an easy outlet of the vale.

That little shady spot, that sylvan tuft,
By which the road is hidden, also hides

A cottage from our view ; though I dis-
cern

(Ye scarcely can) amid its sheltering trees
The smokeless chimney-top.—

All unembowered
And naked stood that lowly Parsonage

(For such in truth it is, and appertains
To a small Chapel in the vale beyond)

When hither came its last Inhabitant.
Rough and forbidding were the choicest
roads

By which our northern wilds could then
be crossed ;

And into most of these secluded vales
Was no access for wain, heavy or light.
So, at his dwelling-place the Priest ar-
rived

With store of household goods, in panniers
slung

On sturdy horses graced with jingling
bells,

And on the back of more ignoble beast :
That, with like burthen of effects most
prized

Or easiest carried, closed the motley
train.

Young was I then, a school-boy of eight
years ;

But still, methinks, I see them as they
passed

In order, drawing toward their wished-
for home,

Rocked by the motion of a trusty ass.
Two ruddy children hung, a well-poised
freight.

Each in his basket nodding drowsily :
Their bonnets, I remember, wreathed
with flowers,

With told it was the pleasant month of
June ;

And, close behind, the comely Matron
rode,

A woman of soft speech and gracious
smile,

And with a lady's mien.—From far they
came,

Even from Northumbrian hills ; yet
theirs had been

A merry journey, rich in pastime, cheered
By music, prank, and laughter-stirring
jest ;

And freak put on, and arch word dropped
—to swell

The cloud of fancy and uncouth surmise
That gathered round the slowly-moving
train.

—Whence do they come ? and with
what errand charged ?

Belong they to the fortune-telling tribe
Who pitch their tents under the green-
wood tree ?

Or Strollers are they, furnished to enact
Fair Rosamond, and the Children of the
Wood,

And, by that whiskered tabby's aid,
set forth

The rocky venture of sage Whittington,
When the next village hears the show
announced

By blast of trumpet ? Plenteous was
the growth

Of such conjectures, overheard, or seen
On many a staring countenance por-
trayed

Of boomer burgher, as they marched along.
And more than once their steadiness of
face

Was put to proof, and exercise supplied
To their inventive humour, by stern looks,
And questions in authoritative tone,

From some staid guardian of the public
peace.

Checking the sober steed on which he
rode,

In his suspicious wisdom ; oftenet still,
By notice indirect, or blunt demand

From traveller halting in his own despite,
A simple curiosity to ease :

Of which adventures, that beguiled and
cheered

Their grave migration, the good pair
would tell,

With undiminished glee, in hoary age.

A Priest he was by function ; but his
course

From his youth up, and high as manhood's
noon,

(The hour of life to which he then was
brought)

Had been irregular, I might say, wild ;
By books unsteadied, by his pastoral
care

Too little checked. An active, ardent
mind :

A fancy pregnant with resource and
scheme

To cheat the sadness of a rainy day ;
Hands apt for all ingenious arts and
games :

A generous spirit, and a body strong
To cope with stoutest champions of the
bowl ;

Had earned for him sure welcome, and
the rights

Of a prized visitant, in the jolly hall
Of country squire : or at the statelier
board

Of duke or earl, from scenes of courtly
pompe

Withdrawn,—to while away the summer
hours

In condescension among rural guests.

With these high comrades he had re-
velled long,

Frolicked industriously, a simple Clerk
By hopes of coming patronage beguiled
Till the heart sickened. So, each loftier
aim

Abandoning and all his showy friends,
For a life's stay (slender it was, but sure)

He turned to this secluded chapelry ;
That had been offered to his doubtful
choice

By an unthought-of patron. Bleak and
bare

They found the cottage, their allotted home ;

Naked without, and rude within ; a spot
With which the Cure not long had been
endowed :

And far remote the chapel stood,—remote,

And, from his Dwelling, unapproachable,
Save through a gap high in the hills, an
opening

Shadeless and shelterless, by driving
showers

Frequented, and beset with howling
winds.

Yet cause was none, whate'er regret
might hang

On his own mind, to quarrel with the
choice

Or the necessity that fixed him here ;
Apart from old temptations, and con-
strained

To punctual labour in his sacred charge.
See him a constant preacher to the poor !

And visiting, though not with saintly
zeal,

Yet, when need was, with no reluctant
will,

The sick in body, or distress in mind ;
And, by as salutary change, compelled

To rise from timely sleep, and meet the
day

With no engagement, in his thoughts,
more proud

Or splendid than his garden could afford,
His fields, or mountains by the heath-
cock ranged,

Or the wild brooks ; from which he now
returned

Contented to partake the quiet meal
Of his own board, where sat his gentle

Mate
And three fair Children, plentifully fed

Though simply, from their little house-
hold farm ;

Nor wanted timely treat of fish or fowl
By nature yielded to his practised hand ;—

To help the small but certain comings-in
Of that spare benefice. Yet not the less

Theirs was a hospitable board, and theirs
A charitable door.

So days and years
Passed on ;—the inside of that rugged

house
Was trimmed and brightened by the

Matron's care,
And gradually enriched with things of

price,
Which might be lacked for use or orna-
ment.

What, though no soft and costly sofa there
Insidiously stretched out its lazy length,

And no vain mirror glittered upon the
walls,

Yet were the windows of the low abode
By shutters weather-fenced, which at

once
Repelled the storm and deadened its loud
roar.

There snow-white curtains hung in decent
folds ;

Tough moss, and long-enduring moun-
tain plants,

That creep along the ground with sinuous
trail,

Were nicely braided ; and composed a
work

Like Indian mats, that with appropriate
grace

Lay at the threshold and the inner doors ;
And a fair carpet, woven of homespun

wool
But inlaid daintily with florid hues,

For seemliness and warmth, on festal
days,

Covered the smooth blue slabs of moun-
tain-stone

With which the parlour-floor, in simplest
guise

Of pastoral homesteads, had been long
inlaid.

Those pleasing works the Housewife's
skill produced :

Meanwhile the unsedentary Master's
hand

Was busier with his task—to rid, to plant,
To rear for food, for shelter, and delight ;

A thriving covert ! And when wishes,
formed

In youth, and sanctioned by the riper
mind,

Restored me to my native valley, here
To end my days ; well pleased was I to

see
The once-bare cottage, on the mountain
side,

Screen'd from assault of every bitter
blast ;

While the dark shadows of the summer
leaves

Danced in the breeze, chequering its
mossy roof.

Time, which had thus afforded willing
help

To beautify with nature's fairest growths
This rustic tenement, had gently shed,

Upon its Master's frame, a wintry grace ;
The comeliness of unenfeebled age.

But how could I say, gently ~~leer~~ he still
Retained a flashing eye, a burning palm,

A stirring foot, a head which beat at
nights

Upon its pillow with a thousand schemes.
Few likings had he dropped, few pleasures

lost ;

Generous and charitable, prompt to serve;
And still his harsher passions kept their hold—

Anger and indignation. Still he loved
The sound of titled names, and talked
in glee

Of long-past banquetings with high-born
friends:

Then, from those lulling fits of vain de-
light

Uproused by recollected injury, railed
At their false ways disdainfully,—and oft

In bitterness, and with a threatening eye
Of fire, incensed beneath its hoary brow.

—Those transports, with staid looks of
pure good will,

And with soft smile, his consort would
reprove.

She, far behind him in the race of years,
Yet keeping her first mildness, was ad-
vanced

Far nearer, in the habit of her soul,
To that still region whither all are bound.

Him might we liken to the setting sun
As seen not seldom on some gusty day,

Struggling and bold, and shining from
the west

With an inconstant and unmelting
light;

She was a soft attendant cloud, that hung
As if with wish to veil the restless orb;

From which it did itself imbibe a ray
Of pleasing lustre.—But no more of this;

I better love to sprinkle on the sod
That now divides the pair, or rather say

That still unites them, praises, like
heaven's dew,

Without reserve descending upon both.

Our very first in eminence of years
This old Man stood, the patriarch of the

Vale!

And, to his unmolested mansion, death
Had never come, through space of forty

years;

Sparing both old and young in that
abode.

Suddenly then they disappeared: not
twice

Had summer scorched the fields; not
twice had fallen,

On those high peaks, the first autumnal
snow,

Before the greedy visiting was closed,
And the long-privileged house left empty

—swept.

As by a plague. Yet no rapacious plague
Had been among them; all was gentle

death.

One after one, with intervals of peace.
A happy consummation! an accord

Sweet, perfect, to be wished for! save
that here

Was something which to mortal sense
might sound

Like harshness,—that the old grey-headed
Sire,

The oldest, he was taken last, survived
When the meek Partner of his age, his

Son,

His Daughter, and that late and high-
prized gift,

His little smiling Grandchild, were no
more.

‘All gone, all vanished! he deprived
and bare,

‘How will he face the remnant of his life?
‘What will become of him?’ we said,

and mused

In sad conjectures—‘Shall we meet him
now

‘Haunting with rod and line the craggy
brooks?

‘Or shall we overhear him, as we pass,
‘Striving to entertain the lonely hours

‘With music?’ (for he had not ceased
to touch

The harp or viol which himself had
framed,

For their sweet purposes, with perfect
skill.)

‘What titles will he keep? will he re-
main

‘Musician, gardener, builder, mechanist,
‘A planter, and a rearer from the seed?

‘A man of hope and forward-looking
mind

‘Even to the last!’—Such was he, un-
subdued.

But Heaven was gracious; yet a little
while,

And this Survivor, with his cheerful
throng

Of open projects, and his inward hoard
Of unsummed griefs, too many and too

keen.

Was overcome by unexpected sleep.
In one blest moment. Like a shadow

thrown

Softly and lightly from a passing cloud,
Death fell upon him, while reclined he

lay

For noontide solace on the summer
grass,

The warm lap of his mother earth: and
so,

Their lenient term of separation past,
That family (whose graves you there be-
hold)

By yet a higher privilege once more
Were gathered to each other.”

Calm of mind
And silence waited on these closing words;

Until the Wanderer (whether moved by
fear

Lest in those passages of life were some
That might have touched the sick heart
of his Friend

Too nearly, or intent to reinforce
His own firm spirit in degree deprest
By tender sorrow for our mortal state)
Thus silence broke :—"Behold a thought-
less Man

From vice and premature decay pre-
served

By useful habits, to a fitter soil
Transplanted ere too late.—The hermit
lodged

Amid the untrodden desert, tell! his
beads,

With each repeating its allotted prayer
And thus divides and thus relieves the
time ;

Smooth task, with his compared, whose
mind could string,

Not scantily, bright minutes on the
thread

Of keen domestic anguish : and beguile
A solitude, unchosen, unprofessed ;
Till gentlest death released him.

Far from us
Be the desire—too curiously to ask
How much of this is but the blind result
Of cordial spirits and vital temperament,
And what to higher powers is justly due.
But you, Sir, know that in a neighbour-
ing vale

A Priest abides before whose life such
doubts

Fall to the ground ; whose gifts of nature
lie

Retired from notice, lost in attributes
Of reason, honourably effaced by debts
Which her poor treasure-house is content
to owe,

And conquests over her dominion gained,
To which her frowardness must needs
submit.

In this one Man is shown a temperance—
proof

Against all trials ; industry severe
And constant as the motion of the day :
Stern self-denial round him spread, with
shade

That might be deemed forbidding, did
not there

All generous feelings flourish and rejoice ;
Forbearance, charity in deed and thought,
And resolution competent to take
Out of the bosom of simplicity

All that her holy customs recommend,
And the best ages of the world prescribe.
—Preaching, administering, in every
work

Of his sublime vocation, in the walks
Of worldly intercourse between man and
man,

his humble dwelling, he appears

A labourer, with moral virtue girt,
With spiritual graces, like a glory,
crowned,

"Doubt can be none," the Pastor said,
"for whom"

This portraiture is sketched. The great,
the good,

The well-beloved, the fortunate, the
wise,—

These titles emperors and chiefs have
borne,

Honour assumed or given : and him, the
WONDERFUL,

Our simple shepherds, speaking from the
heart,

Deservedly have styled.—From his
abode

In a dependent chapel that lies
Behind yon hill, a poor and rugged wild,

Which in his soul he lovingly embraced,
And, having ~~been~~ accused, would never

quit ;

Into its graveyard will ere long be borne
That lowly, great, good Man. A simple

stone

May cover him : and by its help, per-
chance,

A century shall hear his name pro-
nounced,

With images attendant on the sound ;
Then, shall the slowly-gathering twilight

close

In utter night ; and of his course remain
No cognizable vestiges, no more

Than of this breath, which shapes itself
in words

To speak of him, and instantly dissolves."

The Pastor pressed by thoughts which
round his theme

Still linger'd, after a brief pause, resumed ;
"Noise is there not enough in doleful
war,

But that the heaven-born poet must
stand forth,

And lend the echoes of his sacred shell
To multiply and aggravate the din ?

Pangs are there not enough in hopeless
love—

And, in requited passion, all too much
Of turbulence, anxiety, and fear—

But that the minstrel of the rural shade
Must tune his pipe, insidiously to nurse

The perturbation in the suffering breast,
And propagate its kind, far as he may ?

—Ah who (and with such rapture as
befits

The hallowed theme) will rise and cele-
brate

The good man's purposes and deeds !
retrace

His struggles, his discomfitures deplore,

His triumphs hail, and glorify his end ;
 That virtue, like the fumes and vapoury
 clouds
 Through fancy's heat redounding in the
 brain,
 And like the soft infections of the heart,
 By charm of measured words may spread
 o'er field,
 Hamlet, and town ; and pity survive
 Upon the lips of men in hall or bower,
 Not for reproof, but sigh and warm
 delight,
 And grave encouragement, by song in-
 spired ?
 —Vain thought ! but wherefore murmur
 or repine ?
 The memory of the just survives in
 heaven :
 And, without sorrow, will the ground
 receive
 That venerable clay. Meanwhile the
 best
 Of what lies here confines us to degrees
 In excellence less difficult to reach,
 And milder worth : for need we travel
 far
 From those to whom our last regards were
 paid,
 For such example. Almost at the root
 Of that tall pine, the shadow of whose
 bare
 And slender stem, while here I sit at
 eve,
 Oft stretches toward me, like a long
 straight path
 Traced faintly in the greensward ; there,
 beneath
 A plain blue stone, a gentle Dalesman
 lies,
 From whom, in early childhood, was with-
 drawn
 The precious gift of hearing. He grew
 up
 From year to year in loneliness of soul ;
 And this deep mountain-valley was to
 him
 Soundless, with all its streams. The
 bird of dawn
 Did never rouse this Cottager from sleep
 With startling sunitions ; not for his
 delight
 The vernal cuckoo shouted ; nor for him
 Murmured the labouring bee. When
 stormy winds
 Where working the broad bosom of the
 lake
 Into a thousand thousand sparkling
 waves,
 Rocking the trees, or driving cloud on
 cloud
 Along the sharp edge of yon lofty crags,
 The agitated scene before his eye

Was silent as a picture : evermore
 Were all things silent, wheresoe'er he
 moved.
 Yet, by the solace of his own pure
 thoughts
 Upheld, he duteously pursued the round
 Of rural labours ; the steep mountain-
 side
 Ascended, with his staff and faithful dog ;
 The plough he guided, and the scythe, he
 swayed ;
 And the ripe corn before his sickle fell
 Among the jocund reapers. For himself,
 All watchful and industrious as he was,
 He wrought not : neither field nor flock
 he owned :
 No wish for wealth had place within his
 mind :
 Nor husband's love, nor father's hope or
 care.

Though born a younger brother, need
 was none
 That from the floor of his paternal home
 He should depart, to plant himself anew.
 And when, mature in manhood, he beheld
 His parent laid in earth, no loss ensued
 Of rights to him ; but he remained well
 pleased,
 By the pure bond of independent love,
 An inmate of a second family ;
 The fellow-labourer and friend of him
 To whom the small inheritance had fallen.
 —Nor deem that his mild presence was
 a weight
 That pressed upon his brother's house ;
 for books
 Were ready comrades whom he could
 not tire ;
 Of whose society the blameless Man
 Was never satiate. Their familiar voice,
 Even to old age, with unabated charm
 Beguiled his leisure hours ; refreshed his
 thoughts ;
 Beyond its natural elevation raised
 His introverted spirit : and bestowed
 Upon his life an outward dignity
 Which all acknowledged. The dark win-
 ter night,
 The stormy day, each had its own re-
 source ;
 Song of the muses, sage historic tale,
 Science severe, or word of holy Writ
 Announcing immortality and joy
 To the assembled spirits of just men
 Made perfect, and from injury secure.
 —Thus soothed at home, thus busy in
 the field,
 To no perverse suspicion he gave way,
 No languor, peevishness, nor vain com-
 plaint :
 And they, who were about him, did not
 fail . .

In reverence, or in courtesy ; they prized
His gentle manners : and his peaceful
smiles,
The gleams of his slow-varying counten-
ance,
Were met with answering sympathy and
love.

At length, when sixty years and five
were told,
A slow disease insensibly consumed
The powers of nature : and a few short
steps
Of friends and kindred bore him from his
home
(Yon cottage shaded by the woody crags)
To the profounder stillness of the grave.
—Nor was his funeral denied the grace
Of many tears, virtuous and thoughtful
grief ;
Heart-sorrow rendered sweet by grati-
tude.
And now that monumental stone pre-
serves
His name, and unambitiously relates
How long, and by what kindly outward
aids,
And in what pure contentedness of mind,
The sad privation was by him endured.
—And yon tall pine-tree, whose com-
posing sound
Was wasted on the good Man's living
ear,
Hath now its own peculiar sanctity ;
And, at the touch of every wandering
breeze,
Murmurs, not idly, o'er his peaceful grave.

Soul-cheering Light, most bountiful of
things !
Guide of our way, mysterious comforter !
Whose sacred influence, spread through
earth and heaven,
We all too thanklessly participate,
Thy gifts were utterly withheld from
him
Whose place of rest is near yon ivied
porch.
Yet, of the wild brooks ask if he com-
plained ;
Ask of the channelled rivers if they held
A safer, easier, more determined, course.
What terror doth it strike into the mind
To think of one, blind and alone, advanc-
ing
Straight toward some precipice's airy
brink !
But, timely warned, *He* would have stayed
his steps,
Protected, say enlightened, by his ear ;
And on the very edge of vacancy
Not more endangered than a man whose
eye

Beholds the gulf beneath.—No floweret
blooms
Throughout the lofty range of these
rough hills,
Nor in the woods, that could from him
conceal
Its birth-place ; none whose figure did
not live
Upon his touch. The bowels of the earth
Enriched with knowledge his industrious
mind ;
The ocean paid him tribute from the
stores
Lodged in her bosom ; and, by science
led,
His genius mounted to the plains of
heaven.
—Methinks, I see him—how his eye-balls
rolled,
Beneath his ample brow, in darkness
paired,—
But each instinct with spirit ; and the
frame
Of the whole countenance alive with
thought,
Fancy, and understanding ; while the
voice
Discoursed of natural or moral truth
With eloquence, and such authentic
power,
That, in his presence, humbler knowledge
stood
Abashed, and tender pity overawed."

"A noble—and, to unreflecting minds,
A marvellous spectacle," the Wanderer
said,
"Beings like these present. But proof
abounds
Upon the earth that faculties, which
seem
Extinguished, do not, *therefore*, cease to
be.
And to the mind among her powers of
sense
This transfer is permitted,—not alone
That the bereft their recompense may
win ;
But for remoter purposes of love
And charity ; nor last nor least for this,
That to the imagination may be given .
A type and shadow of an awful truth ;
How, likewise, under sufferance divine,
Darkness is banished from the realms
of death,
By man's imperishable spirit, equalled.
Unto the men who see not as we see
Futurity was thought, in ancient times,
To be laid open, and they prophesied.
And know we not that from the blind
have flowed
The highest, holiest, raptures of the lyre ;
And wisdom married to immortal verse ?"

Among the humbler Worthies, at our feet
 Lying insensible to human joys,
 Love, or regret,—*whose* linements would
 next
 Have been portrayed, I guess not ; but
 it chanced
 That, near the quiet church-yard where
 we sate,
 A team of horses, with a ponderous freight,
 Pressing behind, adown a rugged slope,
 Whose sharp descent confounded their
 array,
 Came at that moment, ringing noisily.

"Here," said the Pastor, "do we muse,
 and mourn
 The waste of death ; and lo ! the giant
 oak
 Stretched on his bier—that massy timber
 wain ;
 Nor fail to note the Man who guides the
 team."

He was a peasant of the lowest class :
 Grey locks profusely round his temples hung
 In clustering curls, like ivy, which the
 bite
 Of winter cannot thin ; the fresh air
 lodged
 Within his cheek, as light within a cloud ;
 And he returned our greeting with a
 smile.
 When he had passed, the Solitary spake ;
 "A Man he seems of cheerful yesterdays
 And confident to-morrows ; with a face
 Not worldly-minded, for it bears too
 much
 Of Nature's impress,—gaiety and health,
 Freedom and hope ; but keen, withal,
 and shrewd.
 His gestures note,—and hark ! his tones
 of voice
 Are all vivacious as his mien and looks."

The Pastor answered. "You have read
 him well.
 Year after year is added to his store
 With *silent* increase : summers, winters
 —past,
 Past or to come ; yea, boldly might I say,
 Ten summers and ten winters of a space
 That lies beyond life's ordinary bounds,
 Upon his sprightly vigour cannot fix
 The obligation of an anxious mind,
 A pride in living, or a fear to lose ;
 Possessed like outskirts of some large
 domain,
 By any one more thought of than by
 him
 Who holds the land in fee, its careless
 lord !

Yet is the creature rational, endowed
 With foresight ; hears, too, every sab-
 bath day,
 The christian promise with attentive ear ;
 Nor will, I trust, the Majesty of Heaven
 Reject the incense offered up by him,
 Though of the kind which beasts and
 birds present
 In grove or pasture ; cheerfulness of soul,
 From trepidation and repining free.
 How many scrupulous worshippers fall
 down
 Upon their knees, and daily homage pay
 Less worthy, less religious even, than his !

This qualified respect, the old Man's
 due,
 Is paid without reluctance ; but in truth,"
 (Said the good Vicar with a fond half-
 smile)

"I feel at times a motion of despite
 Towards one, whose bold contrivances
 and skill.

As you have seen, bear such conspicuous
 part
 In works of havoc ; taking from these
 vales,

One after one, their proudest ornaments.
 Full oft his doings leave me to deplore
 Tall ash-tree, sown by winds, by vapours
 nursed,

In the dry crannies of the pendent rocks ;
 Light birch, aloft upon the horizon's edge,
 A veil of glory for the ascending moon ;
 And oak whose roots by noontide dew
 were damped,

And on whose forehead inaccessible
 The raven lodged in safety.—Many a
 ship

Launched into Morecamb-bay, to *him*
 hath owed

Her strong knee-timbers, and the mast
 that bears

The loftiest of her pendants ; He, from
 park

Or forest, fetched the enormous axle-tree
 That whirls (how slow itself !) ten thou-
 sand spindles :

And the vast engine labouring in the
 mine,

Content with meaner prowess, must have
 lacked

The trunk and body of its marvellous
 strength,

If his undaunted enterprise had failed
 Among the mountain coves.

Yon household fir,
 A guardian planted to fence off the blast,
 But towering high the roof above, as if
 its humble destination were forgot—
 That sycamore, which annually holds
 Within its shade, as in a stately tent
 On all sides open to the fanning breeze,

A grave assemblage, seated while they
 shear
 The fleece-encumbered flock—the Joy-
 ful ELM,
 Around whose trunk the maidens dance
 in May—
 And the LOKK's OAK—would plead their
 several rights,
 In vain, if he were master of their fate;
 His sentence to the axe would doom
 them all.
 But, green in age and lusty as he is,
 And promising to keep his hold on earth
 Less, as might seem, in rivalry with
 men
 Than with the forest's more enduring
 growth,
 His own appointed hour will come at
 last;
 And, like the haughty Spoilers of the
 world,
 This keen Destroyer, in his turn, must
 fall.

Now from the living pass we once again:
 From Age," the Priest continued, "turn
 your thoughts;

From Age, that often unlamented drops,
 And mark that daisied hillock, three spans
 long!

—Seven lusty Sons sate daily round the
 board

Of Gold-rill side; and, when the hope
 had ceased

Of other progeny, a Daughter then
 Was given, the crowning bounty of the
 whole;

And so acknowledged with a tremulous
 joy

Felt to the centre of that heavenly calm
 With which by nature every mother's
 soul

Is stricken in the moment when her throes
 Are ended, and her ears have heard the
 cry

Which tells her that a living child is born;
 And she lies conscious, in a blissful rest,
 That the dread storm is weathered by
 them both.

The Father—him at this unlooked-
 for gift

A bolder transport seizes. From the
 side

Of his bright hearth, and from his open
 door,

Day after day the gladness is diffused
 To all that come, almost to all that pass;

Invited, summoned, to partake the cheer
 Spread on the never-empty board, and

drink
 Health and good wishes to his new-born
 girl,

From cups replenished by his joyous
 hand.

—Those seven fair brothers variously
 were moved!

Each by the thoughts best suited to his
 years:

But most of all and with most thankful
 mind

The hoary grandsire felt himself enriched:
 A happiness that ebb'd not, but re-
 main'd

To fill the total measure of his soul!

—From the low tenement, his own abode,
 Whither, as to a little private cell,

He had withdrawn from bustle, care, and
 noise,

To spend the sabbath of old age in peace,
 Once every day he dutifully repaired

To rock the cradle of the slumbering
 babe:

For in that female infant's name he
 heard

The silent name of his departed wife;
 Heart-stirring music! hourly heard that

name;

Full blest he was, 'Another Margaret
 Green,'

Of did he say, 'was come to Gold-rill
 side.'

Oh! pang unthought of, as the gre-
 cious boon

Itself had been unlooked-for; oh! dire
 stroke

Of desolating anguish for them all!

—Just as the Child could totter on the
 floor,

And, by some friendly finger's help up-
 stayed,

Range round the garden walk, while she
 perchance

Was catching at some novelty of spring,
 Ground-flower, or glossy insect from its

cell

Drawn by the sunshine—at that hopeful
 season

The winds of March, smiting insidiously,
 Raised in the tender passage of the

throat

Viewless obstruction; whence, all un-
 forewarn'd,

The household lost their pride and soul's
 delight.

—But time hath power to soften all re-
 grets,

And prayer and thought can bring to
 worst distress

Due resignation. Therefore, though
 some tears

Fail not to spring from either Parent's
 eye

Of as they hear of sorrow like their own,
 Yet this departed Little-one, too long

The innocent troubler of their quiet,
sleeps
In what may now be called a peaceful
bed.

On a bright day—so calm and bright,
it seemed
To us, with our sad spirits, heavenly-
faint

These mountains echoed to an unknown
sound ;

A volley, thrice repeated o'er the Corse
Let down into the hollow of that grave,
Whose shelving sides are red with naked
mould.

Ye rains of April, duly wet this earth ?
Spare, burning sun of midsummer, these
sods,

That they may knit together, and there-
with

Our thoughts unfixed in kindred quietness !
Nor so the Valley shall forget her loss.

Dear Youth, by young and old alike be-
loved,

To me as precious as my own !—Green
Herbs

May creep (I wish that they would softly
creep)

Over thy last abode, and we may pass
Reminded less imperiously of thee ;—
The ridge itself may sink into the breast
Of earth, the great abyss, and be no more ;
Yet shall not thy remembrance leave our
hearts,

Thy image disappear !

The Mountain-ash
No eye can overlook, when 'mid a grove
Of yet unfaded trees she lifts her head
Decked with autumnal berries, that out-
shine

Spring's richest blossoms ; and ye may
have marked,

By a brook-side or solitary tarn,
How she her station doth adorn : the
pool

Glowed at her feet, and all the gloomy rocks
Are brightened round her. In his native
vale

Such and so glorious did this Youth ap-
pear ;

A sight that kindled pleasure in all
hearts

By his ingenuous beauty, by the gleam
Of his fair eyes, by his capacious brow,
By all the graces with which nature's
hand

Had lavishly arrayed him. As old bards
Tell in their idle songs of wandering gods,
Pan or Apollo, veiled in human form :
Yet, like the sweet-breathed violet of the
shade

Discovered in their own despite to sense
Of mortals (if such fables without blame

May find chance-mention on this sacred
ground)

So, through a simple rustic garb's dis-
guise,

And through the impediment of rural
cares,

In him revealed a scholar's genius shone ;
And so, not wholly hidden from men's
sight,

In him the spirit of a hero walked
Our unpretending valley.—How the
quoit

Whizzed from the Stripling's arm ! If
touched by him,

The inglorious foot-ball mounted to the
pitch

Of the lark's flight,—or shaped a rainbow
curve,

Aloft, in prospect of the shouting field !
The indefatigable fox had learned

To dread his perseverance in the chase.
With admiration would he lift his eyes

To the wide-ruling eagle, and his hand
Was loth to assault the majesty he loved ;

Else had the strongest fastnesses proved
weak

To guard the royal brood. The sailing
glead,

The wheeling swallow, and the darting
snipe.

The sportive sea-gull dancing with the
waves,

And cautious water-fowl, from distant
climes,

Fixed at their seat, the centre of the
Merc,

Were subject to young Oswald's steady
aim,

And lived by his forbearance.

From the coast
Of France a boastful Tyrant hurled his
threats ;

Our Country marked the preparation vast
Of hostile forces ; and she called—with
voice

That filled her plains, that reached her
utmost shores,

And in remotest vales was heard—to
arms !

—Then, for the first time, here you might
have seen

The shepherd's grey to martial scarlet
changed.

That flashed uncouthly through the
woods and fields.

Ten hardy Striplings, all in bright attire,
And graced with shining weapons, weekly
marched,

From this lone valley, to a central spot
Where, in assemblage with the flower and
choice

Of the surrounding district, they might
learn

The rudiments of war ; tén—hardy,
 strong,
 And valiant ; but young Oswald, like a
 chief
 And yet a modest comrade, led them
 forth
 From their shy solitude, to face the
 world,
 With a gay confidence and seemly pride ;
 Measuring the soil beneath their happy
 feet
 Like Youths released from labour, and
 yet bound
 To most laborious service, though to them
 A festival of unencumbered ease ;
 The inner spirit keeping holiday,
 Like vernal ground to sabbath sunshine
 left.

Of have I marked him, at some
 leisure hour,
 Stretched on the grass, or seated in the
 shade,
 Among his fellows, while an ample map
 Before their eyes lay carefully outspread,
 From which the gallant teacher would
 discourse,
 Now pointing this way, and now that.—
 'Here flows,'
 Thus would he say, 'The Rhine, that
 famous stream !
 'Eastward, the Danube toward this
 inland sea,
 'A mightier river, winds from realm to
 realm ;
 'And, like a serpent, shows his glittering
 back
 'Bespotted—with innumerable isles :
 'Here reigns the Russian, there the Turk :
 observe
 'His capital city !' Thence, along a
 tract
 Of livelier interest to his hopes and fears,
 His finger moved, distinguishing the spots
 Where wide-spread conflict then most
 fiercely raged ;
 Nor left unstigmatized those fatal fields
 On which the sons of mighty Germany
 Were taught a base submission.—'Here
 behold
 'A nobler race, the Switzers, and their
 land,
 'Vales deeper far than these of ours, huge
 woods,
 'And mountains white with everlasting
 snow !'
 —And, surely, he, that spake with kind-
 ling brow,
 Was a true patriot, hopeful as the best
 Of that young peasantry, who, in our
 days,
 Have fought and perished for Helvetia's
 rights—

Ah, not in vain !—or those who, in old
 time,
 For work of happier issue, to the side
 Of Tell came trooping from a thousand
 huts,
 When he had risen alone ! No braver
 Youth
 Descended from Judean heights, to march
 With righteous Joshua ; nor appeared
 in arms
 When grove was felled, and altar was
 cast down.
 And Gideon blew the trumpet, soul-in-
 flamed,
 And strong in hatred of idolatry."

The Pastor, even as if by these last
 words
 Raised from his seat within the chosen
 shade,
 Moved toward the grave,—instinctively
 his steps—
 We followed : and my voice with joy
 exclaimed :
 "Power to the Oppressors of the world
 is given,
 A might of which they dream not. Oh !
 the curse,
 To be the awakener of divinest thoughts,
 Father and founder of exalted deeds ;
 And, to whole nations bound in servile
 straits,
 The liberal donor of capacities
 More than heroic ! this to be, nor yet
 Have sense of one connatural wish, nor
 yet
 Deserve the least return of human thanks ;
 Winning no recompense but deadly hate
 With pity mixed, astonishment with
 scorn !"

When this involuntary strain had
 ceased,
 The Pastor said : "So Providence is
 served ;
 The forked weapon of the skies can send
 Illumination into deep, dark holds,
 Which the mild sunbeam hath not power
 to pierce.
 Ye Thrones that have defied remorse, and
 cast
 Pity away, soon shall ye quake with
 fear !
 For, not unconscious of the mighty debt
 Which to outrageous wrong the sufferer
 owes,
 Europe, through all her habitable bounds,
 Is thirsting for their overthrow, who yet
 Survive, as pagan temples stood of yore,
 By horror of their impious rites, pre-
 served ;
 Are still permitted to extend their pride,
 Like cedars on the top of Lebanon

Darkening the sun.

But less impatient thoughts;
And love 'all hoping and expecting all,'
This hallowed grave demands, where
rests in peace

A humble champion of the better cause;
A Peasant-youth, so call him, for he
asked

No higher name; in whom our country
showed,

As in a favourite son, most beautiful.
In spite of vice, and misery, and disease,
Spread with the spreading of her wealthy
arts,

England, the ancient and the free, ap-
peared

In him to stand before my swimming
eyes,

Unconquerably virtuous and secure.

—No more of this, lest I offend his dust:
Short was his life, and a brief tale remains.

One day—a summer's day of annual
pomps

And solemn chase—from morn to sultry
noon

His steps had followed, fleetest of the
fleet,

The red-deer driven along its native
heights,

With cry of hound and horn; and, from
that toil

Returned with sinews weakened and re-
laxed,

This generous Youth, too negligent of self,
Plunged—mid a gay and busy throng
convened

To wash the fleeces of his Father's flock—
Into the chilling flood. Convulsions dire

Seized him, that self-same night; and
through the space

Of twelve ensuing days his fame was
wrenched,

Till nature fested from her work in death.
To him, thus snatched away, his coun-
rades paid

A soldier's honours. At his funeral hour
Bright was the sun, the sky a cloudless
blue—

A golden lustre slept upon the hills;
And if by chance a stranger, wandering
there,

From some commanding eminence had
looked

Down on this spot, well pleased would
he have seen

A glittering spectacle; but every face
Was pallid: seldom hath that eye been
moist

With tears, that wept not then; nor were
the few,

Who from their dwellings came not forth
to join

to join

to join

to join

to join

to join

to join

In this sad service, less disturbed than
we.

They started at the tributary peal
Of instantaneous thunder, which an-
nounced,

Through the still air, the closing of the
Grave;

And distant mountains echoed with a
sound

Of lamentation, never heard before!"

The Pastor ceased.—My venerable
Friend

Victoriously upraised his clear bright
eye;

And, when that eulogy was ended, stood
Enrapt, as if his inward sense perceived

The prolongation of some still response,
Sent by the ancient Soul of this wide land,

The Spirit of its mountains and its seas,
Its cities, temples, fields, its awful power,

Its rights and virtues—by that Deity
Descending, and supporting his pure
heart

With patriotic confidence and joy.

And, at the last of those memorial words,
The pining Solitary turned aside;

Whether through manly instinct to con-
ceal

Tender emotions spreading from the
heart

To his worn cheek; or with uneasy
shame

For those cold humours of habitual spleen
That, fondly seeking in dispraise of man

Solace and self-excuse, had sometimes
urged

To self-abuse a not ineloquent tongue.

—Right toward the sacred Edifice his
steps

Had been directed; and we saw him now
Intent upon a monumental stone,

Whose uncouth form was grafted on the
wall,

Or rather seemed to have grown into the
side

Of the rude pile; as oft-times trunks of
trees,

Where nature works in wild and craggy
spots,

Are seen incorporate with the living rock—
To endure for aye. The Vicar, taking
note

Of his employment, with a courteous
smile

Exclaimed—
"The sagest Antiquarian's eye

That task would foil;" then, letting fall
his voice

While he advanced, thus spake: "Tradi-
tion tells

That, in Eliza's golden days, a Knight
Came on a war-horse sumptuously attired,

to join

to join

to join

And fixed his home in this sequestered vale.

'Tis left untold if here he first drew breath,
Or as a stranger reached this deep recess,
Unknowing and unknown. A pleasing thought

I sometimes entertain, that haply bound
To Scotland's court in service of his Queen,

Or sent on mission to some northern Chief
Of England's realm, this vale he might have seen

With transient observation; and thence caught

An image fair, which, brightening in his soul

When joy of war and pride of chivalry
Languished beneath accumulated years,
Had power to draw him from the world, resolved

To make that paradise his chosen home
To which his peaceful fancy oft had turned.

Vague thoughts are these; but, if belief may rest

Upon unwritten story fondly traced
From sire to son, in this obscure retreat
The Knight arrived, with spear and shield, and borne

Upon a Charger gorgeously bedecked
With brodered housings. And the lofty Steed—

His sole companion, and his faithful friend,

Whom he, in gratitude, let loose to range
In fertile pastures—was beheld with eyes
Of admiration and delightful awe,
By those untravell'd Dalesmen. With less pride,

Yet free from touch of envious discontent,
They saw a mansion at his bidding rise,
Like a bright star, amid the lowly band
Of their rude homesteads. Here the Warrior dwelt;

And, in that mansion, children of his own,
Or kindred, gathered round him. As a tree

That falls and disappears, the house is gone;

And, through improvidence or want of love

For ancient worth and honourable things,
The spear and shield are vanished, which the Knight

Hung in his rustic hall. One ivied arch
Myself have seen, a gateway, last remains
Of that foundation in domestic care
Raised by his hands. And now no trace is left

Of the mild-hearted Champion, save this stone,

Faithless memorial! and his family name

Borne by yon clustering cottages, that sprang

From out the ruins of his stately lodge:
These, and the name and title at full length,—

Sir Alfred Tennyson, with appropriate words

Accompanied, still extant, in a wreath
Or posy, girding round the several fronts
Of three clear-sounding and harmonious bells,

That in the steeply hung, his pious gift."

"So fails, so languishes, grows dim, and dies,"

The grey-haired Wanderer pensively exclaimed,

"All that this world is proud of. From their spheres

The stars of human glory are cast down;
Perish the roses and the flowers of kings,
Princes, and emperors, and the crowns and palms

Of all the mighty, withered and consumed!

Nor is power given to lowliest innocence
Long to protect her own. The man himself

Departs; and soon is spent the line of those

Who, in the bodily image, in the mind,
In heart or soul, in station or pursuit,
Did most resemble him. Degrees and ranks,

Fraternities and orders—heaping high
New wealth upon the burthen of the old,
And placing trust in privilege, confirmed
And re-confirmed—are scoffed at with a smile

Of greedy foretaste, from the secret stand
Of Desolation, aimed: to slow decline
These yield, and these to sudden overthrow:

Their virtue, service, happiness, and state
Expire; and nature's pleasant robe of green,

Humanity's appointed shroud, enwraps
Their monuments and their memory.

The vast Frame

Of social nature changes evermore
Her organs and her members with decay
Restless, and restless generation, powers
And functions dying and produced at need,—

And by this law the mighty whole subsists:

With an ascent and progress in the main;
Yet, oh! how disproportioned to the hopes

And expectations of self-flattering minds!

The courteous Knight, whose bones are here interred,

Lived in an age conspicuous as our own
For strife and ferment in the minds of
men ;

Whence alteration in the forms of things,
Various and vast. A memorable age !
Which did to him assign a pensive lot—
To linger 'mid the last of those bright
clouds

That, on the steady breeze of honour,
Sailed

In long procession calm and beautiful.
He who had seen his own bright order
fade,

And its devotion gradually decline,
(While war, relinquishing the lance and
shield,

Her temper changed, and bowed to other
laws)

Had also witnessed, in his morn of life,
That violent commotion, which o'er-
threw,

In town and city and sequestered glen,
Altar, and cross, and church of solemn
roof

And old religious house—pile after pile ;
And shook their tenants out into the
fields,

Like wild beasts without home ! Their
hour was come ;

But why so softening thought of grati-
tude,

No just remembrance, scruple, or wise
doubt ?

Benevolence is mild ; nor borrows help,
Save at worst need, from bold impetuous
force,

Fittest allied to anger and revenge.

But Human-kind rejoices in the might
Of mutability ; and airy hopes,
Dancing around her, hinder and disturb
Those meditations of the soul that feed
The retrospective virtues. Festive songs
Break from the maddened nations at the
sight

Of sudden overthrow ; and cold neglect
Is the sure consequence of slow decay.

Even," said the Wanderer, "as that
courteous Knight,

Bound by his vow to labour for redress
Of all who suffer wrong, and to enact
By sword and lance the law of gentleness,
(If I may venture of myself to speak,
Trusting that not incongruously I blend
Low things with lofty) I too shall be
doomed

To outlive the kindly use and fair esteem
Of the poor calling which my youth em-
braced

With no unworthy prospect. But enough ;
—Thoughts crowd upon me—and 'twere
seemlier now

To stop, and yield our gracious Teacher
thanks

For the pathetic records which his voice
Hath here delivered ; words of heartfelt
truth,

Tending to patience when affliction
strikes ;

To hope and love ; to confident repose
In God ; and reverence for the dust of
Man."

BOOK EIGHTH

THE PARSONAGE

• ARGUMENT

Pastor's apology and apprehensions that he
might have detained his Auditors too long,
with the Pastor's invitation to his house—
Solitary disinclined to comply—rallies the
Wanderer—and playfully draws a comparison
between his itinerant profession and that of
the Knight-errant—which leads to Wanderer's
giving an account of changes in the Country
from the manufacturing spirit—Favourable
effects—The other side of the picture, and
chiefly as it has affected the humbler classes
—Wanderer asserts the hollowness of all
national grandeur if unsupported by moral
worth—Physical science unable to support
itself—Lamentations over an excess of manu-
facturing industry among the humbler Classes
of Society—Picture of a Child employed in a
Cotton-mill—Ignorance and degradation of
Children among the agricultural Population
reviewed—Conversation broken off by a re-
newed invitation from the Pastor—Path
leading to his House—Its appearance des-

cribed—His Daughter—His Wife—His Son
(a Boy) enters with his Companion—Their
happy appearance—the Wanderer how af-
fected by the sight of them.

THE pensive Sceptic of the lonely vale
To those acknowledgments subscribed
his own,

With a sedate compliance, which the
Priest

Failed not to notice, inly pleased, and
said :—

"If ye, by whom invited I began
These narratives of calm and humble life,
Be satisfied, 'tis well,—the end is gained ;
And, in return for sympathy bestowed
And patient listening, thanks accept from
me.

—Life, death, eternity ! momentous
themes

Are they—and might demand a seraph's
tongue,

Were they not equal to their own support;
And therefore no incompetence of mine
Could do them wrong. The universal
forms

Of human nature, in a spot like this,
Present themselves at once to all men's
view:

Ye wished for act and circumstance,
that make

The individual known and understood;
And such as my best judgment could select

From what the place afforded, have been
given;

Though apprehensions crossed me that
my zeal

To his might well be likened, who unlocks
A cabinet stored with gems and pictures
—draws

His treasures forth, exhibiting regard
To this, and this, as worthier than the
last,

Till the spectator, who awhile was pleased
More than the exhibitor himself, becomes
Weary and faint, and longs to be released.
—But let us hence! my dwelling is in
sight,
And there—”

At this the Solitary shrunk
With backward will; but, wanting not
address

That inward motion to disguise, he said
To his Compatriot, smiling as he spake;
—“The peaceable remains of this good
Knight

Would be disturbed, I fear, with wrath-
ful scorn,

If consciousness could reach him where
he lies

That one, albeit of these degenerate
times,

Deploring changes past, or dreading
change

Foreseen, had dared to couple, even in
thought,

The fine vocation of the sword and lance
With the gross aims and body-bending
toil

Of a poor brotherhood who walk the
earth

Pitied, and, where they are not known,
despised.

Yet, by the good Knight's leave, the
two estates

Are graced with some resemblance.
Errant those,

Exiles and wanderers—and the like are
these;

Who, with their burthen, traverse hill
and dale,

Carrying relief for nature's simple wants.
—What though no higher recompense
be sought

Than honest maintenance, by irksome
toil

Full oft procured, yet may they claim
respect,

Among the intelligent, for what this
course

Enables them to be and to perform.
Their tardy steps give leisure to observe,

While solitude permits the mind to feel;
Instructs, and prompts her to supply
defects

By the division of her inward self
For grateful converse: and to these poor
men

Nature (I but repeat your favourite
boast)

Is bountiful—go wheresoe'er they may:
Kind nature's various wealth is all their
own.

Versed in the characters of men; and
bound,

By ties of daily interest, to maintain
Conciliatory manners and smooth speech:

Such have been, and still are in their
degree,

Examples efficacious to refine
Rude intercourse: apt agents to expel,

By importation of unlooked for arts,
Barbarian torpor, and blind prejudice;

Raising, through just gradation, savage
life

To rustic, and the rustic to urbane.
—Within their moving magazines is
lodged

Power that comes forth to quicken and
exalt

Affections seated in the mother's breast,
And in the lover's fancy; aid to feed
The sober sympathies of long-tried friends.

—By these Itinerants, as experienced
men,

Counsel is given; contention they ap-
pease

With gentle language, in remotest wilds,
Tears wipe away, and pleasant tidings
bring;

Could the proud quest of chivalry do
more?”

“Happy,” rejoined the Wanderer,
“they who gain

A panegyric from your generous tongue!
But, if to these Wayfarers once pertained
Aught of romantic interest, it is gone.

Their purer service, in this realm at least,
Is past for ever.—An inventive Age

Has wrought, if not with speed of magic,
yet

To most strange issues. I have lived
to mark

A new and unforeseen creation rise
From out the labours of a peaceful Land

Wielding her potent enginery to frame

And to produce, with appetite as keen
 As that of war, which rests not night or
 day,
 Industrious to destroy! With fruitless
 pains
 Might one like me now visit many a
 tract
 Which, in his youth, he trod, and trod
 again,
 • A lone pedestrian with a scanty freight,
 Wished-for, or welcome, wheresoe'er he
 came—
 Among the tenantry of thorpe and vill;
 Or straggling burgh, of ancient charter
 proud,
 And dignified by battlements and towers
 Of some stern castle, mouldering on the
 brow
 Of a green hill or bank of rugged stream.
 The foot-path faintly marked, the horse-
 track wild,
 • And formidable length of plashy lane,
 (Prized avenues ere others had been
 shaped,
 • Or easier links connecting place with
 place)
 Have vanished—swallowed up by stately
 roads
 Easy and bold, that penetrate the gloom
 Of Britain's farthest glens. The Earth
 has lent
 Her waters, Air her breezes; and the sail
 Of traffic glides with ceaseless intercourse,
 Glistening along the low and woody dale;
 Or, in its progress, on the lofty side,
 Of some bare hill, with wonder kenned
 from far.

Meanwhile, at social Industry's com-
 mand,
 How quick, how vast an increase! From
 the germ
 Of some poor hamlet, rapidly produced
 Here a huge town, continuous and com-
 pact,
 Hiding the face of earth for leagues—
 and there,
 • Where not a habitation stood before,
 Abodes of men irregularly massed
 Like trees in forests,—spread through
 spacious tracts,
 • O'er which the smoke of unremitting fires
 Hangs permanent, and plentiful as
 wreaths,
 • Of vapour glittering in the morning sun.
 And, wheresoe'er the traveller turns his
 steps,
 He sees the barren wilderness erased,
 Or disappearing; triumph that proclaims
 How much the mild Directress of the
 plough
 Owes to alliance with these new-born
 arts!

—Hence is the wide sea peopled,—hence
 the shores
 Of Britain are resorted to by ships
 Freight from every climate of the
 world
 With the world's choicest produce.
 Hence that sum
 Of keels that rest within her crowded
 ports,
 Or ride at anchor in her sounds and bays;
 That animating spectacle of sails
 That, through her inland regions, to and
 fro
 Pass with the respirations of the tide,
 Perpetual, multitudinous! Finally,
 Hence a dread arm of floating power, a
 voice
 Of thunder daunting those who would
 approach
 With hostile purposes the blessed Isle,
 Truth's consecrated residence, the seat
 Impregnable of Liberty and Peace.

And yet, O happy Pastor of a flock
 Faithfully watched, and, by that loving
 care
 And Heaven's good providence, pre-
 served from taint!
 With you I grieve, when on the darker
 side
 Of this great change I look; and there
 behold
 Such outrage done to nature as compels
 The indignant power to justify herself;
 Yea, to avenge her violated rights,
 For England's bane.—When soothing
 darkness spreads
 O'er hill and vale," the Wanderer thus
 expressed
 His recollections, "and the punctual
 stars,
 While all things else are gathering to their
 homes,
 Advance, and in the firmament of heaven
 Glitter—but undisturbed, undisturbed;
 As if their silent company were charged
 With peaceful admonitions for the heart
 Of all-beholding Man, earth's thoughtful
 lord;
 Then, in full many a region, once like this
 The assured domain of calm simplicity
 And pensive quiet, an unnatural light
 Prepared for never-resting Labour's eyes
 Breaks from a many-windowed fabric
 huge;
 And at the appointed hour a bell is heard,
 Of harsher import than the curfew-knoll
 That spake the Norman Conqueror's
 stern behest—
 A local summons to unceasing toil!
 Disgorge are now the ministers of day;
 And, as they issue from the illumined
 pile,

A fresh band meets them, at the crowded door—

And in the courts—and where the rumbling stream,

That turns the multitude of dizzy wheels, Glares, like a troubled spirit, in its bed

Among the rocks below. Men, maidens, youths,

Mother and little children, boys, and girls,

Enter, and each the wonted task resumes Within this temple, where is offered up

To Gain, the master idol of the realm, Perpetual sacrifice. Even thus of old

Our ancestors, within the still domain Of vast cathedral or conventual church,

Their vigils kept; where tapers day and night

On the dim altar burned continually, In token that the House was evermore

Watching to God. Religious men were they;

Nor would their reason, tutored to aspire Above this transitory world, allow

That there should pass a moment of the year,

When in their land the Almighty's service ceased.

Triumph who will in these profaner rites

Which we, a generation self-extolled, As zealously perform! I cannot share

His proud complacency:—yet do I exult, Casting reserve away, exult to see

An intellectual mastery exercised O'er the blind elements; a purpose given,

A perseverance fed; almost a soul Imparted—to brute matter. I rejoice,

Measuring the force of those gigantic powers

That, by the thinking mind, have been compelled

To serve the will of feeble-bodied Man. For with the sense of admiration blends

The animating hope that time may come When, strengthened, yet not dazzled, by

the might

Of this dominion over nature gained, Men of all lands shall exercise the same

In due proportion to their country's need; Learning, though late, that all true glory

rests,

All praise, all safety, and all happiness, Upon the moral law. Egyptian Thebes,

Tyre, by the margin of the sounding waves,

Palmyra, central in the desert, fell; And the Arts died by which they had

been raised.

—Call Archimedes from his buried tomb Upon the grave of vanished Syracuse,

And feelingly the Sage shall make report

How insecure, how baseless in itself, Is the Philosophy whose sway depends On mere material instruments;—how weak

Those arts, and high inventions, if unpropped

By virtue.—He, sighing with pensive grief,

Amid his calm abstractions, would admit That not the slentler privilege is theirs

To save themselves from blank forgetfulness!

When from the Wanderer's lips these words had fallen,

I said, "And, did in truth those vaunted Arts

Possess such privilege, how could we escape

Sadness and keen regret, we who revere, And would preserve as things above all

price,

The old domestic morals of the land, Her simple manners, and the stable

worth

That dignified and cheered a low estate? Oh! where is now the character of peace,

Sobriety, and order, and chaste love, And honest dealing, and untainted speech,

And pure good-will, and hospitable cheer; That made the very thought of country-

life

A thought of refuge, for a mind detained Reluctantly amid the bustling crowd?

Where now the beauty of the sabbath kept

With conscientious reverence, as a day By the almighty Lawgiver pronounced

Holy and blest? and where the winning grace

Of all the lighter ornaments attached To time and season, as the year rolled

round?"

"Fled!" was the Wanderer's passionate response,

"Fled utterly! or only to be traced In a few fortunate retreats like this;

Which I behold with trembling, when I think

What lamentable change, a year—a month—

May bring; that brook converting as it runs

Into an instrument of deadly hate For those, who, yet untempted to forsake

The simple occupations of their sires, Drink the pure water of its innocent

stream

With lip almost as pure.—Domestic bliss (Or call it comfort, by a humbler name,)

How art thou blighted for the poor Man's heart!

Lo! in such neighbourhood, from morn
to eve,

The habitations empty! or perchance
The Mother left alone,—no helping hand
To rock the cradle of her peevish babe;
No daughters round her, busy at the
wheel,

Or in dispatch of each day's little growth
Of household occupation; no nice arts
Of needle-work; no bustle at the fire,

Where once the dinner was prepared with
pride;

Nothing to speed the day, or cheer the
mind;

Nothing to praise, to teach, or to com-
mand!

The Father, if perchance he still retain
His old employments, goes to field or
wood,

No longer led or followed by the Sons;
Idlers, perchance they were,—but in his
sight;

Breathing fresh air, and treading the
green earth;

'Till their short holiday of childhood
ceased,

Ne'er to return! That birthright now is
lost.

Economists will tell you that the State
Thrives by the forfeiture—unfretful
thought,

And false as monstrous! Can the mother
thrive

By the destruction of her innocent sons
In whom a premature necessity

Blocks out the forms of nature, precon-
sumes

The reason, famishes the heart, shuts up
The infant Being in itself, and makes
Its very spring a season of decay!

The lot is wretched, the condition sad,
Whether a pining discontent survive,
And thirst for change: or habit hath sub-
dued

The soul deprest, dejected—even to love
Of her close tasks, and long captivity.

Oh, banish far such wisdom as con-
demns

A native Briton, to these inward chains,
Fixed in his soul, so early and so deep;
Without his own consent, or knowledge,
fixed!

He is a slave to whom release comes not,
And cannot come. The boy, where'er
he turns,

Is still a prisoner; when the wind is up
Among the clouds, and roars through the
ancient woods;

Or when the sun is shining in the east,
Quiet and calm. Behold him—in the
school

Of his attainments? no; but with the
air

Fanning his temples under heaven's blue
arch.

His raiment, whitened o'er with cotton-
flakes

Or locks of wool, announces whence he
comes.

Creeping his gait and cowering, his lip
pale,

His respiration quick and audible;
And scarcely could you fancy that a gleam

Could break from out those languid eyes,
or a blush

Mantle upon his cheek. Is this the form,
Is that the countenance, and such the
port.

Of no mean Being? One who should be
clothed

With dignity befitting his proud hope;
Who, in his very childhood, should appear

Sublime from present purity and joy!
The limbs increase; but liberty of mind

Is gone for ever; and this organic frame,
So joyful in its motions, is become

Dull, to the joy of her own motions dead;
And even the touch, so exquisitely

poured
Through the whole body, with a languid
will

Performs its functions; rarely competent
To impress a vivid feeling on the mind

Of what there is delightful in the breeze,
The gentle visitations of the sun,

Or lapse of liquid element—by hand,
Or foot, or lip, in summer's warmth—

perceived.
—Can hope look forward to a manhood
raised

On such foundations? "

"Hope is none for him!"

The pale Recluse indignantly exclaimed,
"And tens of thousands suffer wrong as
deep.

Yet be it asked, in justice to our age,
If there were not, before those arts ap-
peared.

These structures rose, commingling old
and young,

And unripe sex with sex, for mutual taint;
If there were not, then, in our far-famed
Isle,

Multitudes, who from infancy had
breathed

Air unimprisoned, and had lived at large;
Yet walked beneath the sun, in human
shape.

As abject, as degraded? At this day,
Who shall enumerate the crazy huts

And tottering hovels, whence do issue
forth

A ragged Offspring, with their upright
hair

Crowned like the image of fantastic Fear ;
Or wearing, (shall we say ?) in that white
growth

An ill-adjusted turban, for defence
Or fierceness, wreathed around their sun-
burnt brows,

By savage Nature ? Shrivelled are their
lips ;

Naked, and coloured like the soil, the feet
On which they stand ; as if thereby they
drew

Some nourishment, as trees do by their
roots,

From earth, the common mother of us all.
Figure and mien, complexion and attire,
Are leagued to strike dismay ; but out-
stretched hand

And whining voice denote their suppli-
cants

For the least boon that pity can bestow.
Such on the breast of darksome heaths
are found ;

And with their parents occupy the skirts
Of furze-clad commons ; such are born
and reared

At the mine's mouth under impending
rocks ;

Or dwell in chambers of some natural
cave ;

Or where their ancestors erected huts,
For the convenience of unlawful gain,

In forest purlieus ; and the like are bred,
All England through, where nooks and
slips of ground

Purloined, in times less jealous than our
own,

From the green margin of the public way,
A residence afford them, 'mid the bloom
And gaiety of cultivated fields.

Such (we will hope the lowest in the scale)
Do I remember oft-times to have seen
'Mid Buxton's dreary heights. In earn-
est watch,

Till the swift vehicle approach, they
stand ;

Then, following closely with the cloud
of dust,

An uncouth feat exhibit, and are gone
Heels over head, like tumblers on a stage

—Up from the ground they snatch the
copper coin,

And, on the freight of merry passengers
Fixing a steady eye, maintain their speed ;
And spin—and pant—and overhead
again,

Wild pursuivants ! until their breath is
lost,

Or bounty tires—and every face, that
smiled

Encouragement, hath ceased to look that
way.

—But, like the vagrants of the gipsy
tribe,

These, bred to little pleasure in them-
selves,

Are profitless to others.

Turn we then
To Britons born and bred within the pale
Of civil polity, and early trained

To earn, by wholesome labour in the field,
The bread they eat. A sample should I
give

Of what this stock hath long produced,
to enrich

The tender age of life, ye would exclaim,
'Is this the whistling plough-boy whose
shrill notes

Impart new gladness to the morning air !'
Forgive me if I venture to suspect

That many, sweet to hear of in soft verse,
Are of no finer frame. Stiff are his joints ;
Beneath a cumbrous frock, that to the
knees

Inverts the thriving churl, his legs appear,
Fellows to those that lustily upheld

The wooden stools for everlasting use,
Whereon our fathers sat. And mark
his brow !

Under whose shaggy canopy are set
Two eyes—not dim, but of a healthy
stare—

Wide, sluggish, blank, and ignorant, and
strange—

Proclaiming boldly that they never drew
A look or motion of intelligence

From infant-conning of the Christ-cross-
row,

Or puzzling through a primer, line by
line,

Till perfect mastery crown the pains at
last.

—What kindly warmth from touch of
fostering hand,

What penetrating power of sun or breeze,
Shall e'er dissolve the crust wherein his
soul

Sleeps, like a caterpillar sheathed in ice ?
This torpor is no pitiable work

Of modern ingenuity ; no town
Nor crowded city can be taxed with

ought

Of sottish vice or desperate breach of
law,

To which (and who can tell where or
how soon ?)

He may be roused. This Boy the fields
produce :

His spade and hoe, mattock and glitter-
ing scythe,

The carter's whip that on his shoulder
rests

In air high-towering with a boorish pomp,
The sceptre of his sway ; his country's
name,

Her equal rights, her churches and her
schools—

What have they done for him? And, let me ask,
For tens of thousands ununiformed as he?
In brief, what liberty of mind is here?"

This ardent sally pleased the mild good Man,

To whom the appeal couched in its closing words
Was pointedly addressed; and to the thoughts

That, in assent or opposition, rose
Within his mind, he seemed prepared to give

Prompt utterance; but the Vicar interposed

With invitation urgently renewed.

—We followed, taking as he led, a path
Along a hedge of hollies dark and tall,
Whose flexible boughs low bending with a weight

Of leafy spray, concealed the stems and roots

That gave them nourishment. When frosty wind

Howl from the north, what kindly warmth, methought,

Is here—how grateful this impervious screen!

—Not shaped by simple wearing of the foot

On rural business passing to and fro
Was the commodious walk: a careful hand

Had marked the line, and strewn its surface o'er

With pure cerulean gravel, from the heights

Fetched by a neighbouring brook.—Across the vale

The stately fence accompanied our steps;
And thus the pathway, by perennial green

Guarded and graced, seemed fashioned to unite,

As by a beautiful yet solemn chain,
The Pastor's mansion with the house

of prayer.

Like image of solemnity, conjoined
With feminine allurements soft and fair,

The mansion's self displayed;—a reverend pile

With bold projections and recesses deep;
Shadowy, yet gay and lightsome as

stood
Fronting the noontide sun. We paused to admire

The pillared porch, elaborately embossed;
The low wide windows with their mullions

old;
The cornice, richly fretted, of grey stone;

And that smooth slope from which the dwelling rose,

By beds and banks Arcadian of gay flowers

And flowering shrubs, protected and adorned:

Profusion bright! and every flower assuming

A more than natural vividness of hue,
From unaffected contrast with the gloom

Of sober cypress, and the darker foil
Of few, in which, survived some traces,

here
Not unbecoming, of grotesque device

And uncouth, fancy. From behind the roof

Rose the slim ash and massy sycamore,
Blending their diverse foliage with the green

Of ivy, flourishing and thick, that clasped

The huge round chimneys, harbour of delight

For wren and redbreast,—where they sit and sing

Their slender ditties when the trees are bare.

Nor must I leave untouched (the picture else

Were incomplete) a relique of old times
Happily spared, a little Gothic niche

Of nicest workmanship; that once had held

The sculptured image of some patron-saint,

Or of the blessed Virgin, looking down
On all who entered those religious doors.

But lo! where from the rocky garden-mount

Crowned by its antique summer-house—descends,

Light as the silver fawn, a radiant Girl;
For she hath recognised her honoured friend,

The Wanderer ever welcome! A prompt kiss

The gladsome Child bestows at his request;

And, up the flowery lawn as we advance,
Hangs on the old Man with a happy look,

And with a pretty restless hand of love.
—We enter—by the Lady of the place

Cordially greeted. Graceful was her port:
A lofty stature undepressed by time,

Whose visitation had not wholly spared
The finer lineaments of form and face;

To that complexion brought which prudence trusts in

And wisdom loves.—But when a stately ship

Sails in smooth weather by the placid coast

On homeward voyage, what—if wind and wave,

And hardship undergone in various
climes,
Have caused her to abate the virgin pride,
And that full trim of inexperienced hope
With which she left her haven—not for
this,
Should the sun strike her, and the im-
partial breeze
Play on her streamers, fails she to assume
Brightness and touching beauty of her
own,
That charm all eyes. So bright, so fair,
appeared
This goodly Matron, shining in the beams
Of unexpected pleasure.—Soon the board
Was spread, and we partook a plain re-
past.

Here, resting in cool shelter, we be-
guiled
The mid-day hours with desultory talk;
From trivial themes to general argument
Passing, as accident or fancy led,
Or courtesy prescribed. While question
rose
And answer flowed, the fetters of reserve
Dropping from every mind, the Solitary
Resumed the manners of his happier
days;
And in the various conversation bore
A willing, nay, at times, a forward part;
Yet with the grace of one who in the
world
Had learned the art of pleasing, and had
now
Occasion given him to display his skill,
Upon the steadfast vantage-ground of
truth.
He gazed, with admiration unsuppressed,
Upon the landscape of the sun-bright
vale,
Seen, from the shady room in which we
sate,
In softened perspective; and more than
once
Praised the consummate harmony serene
Of gravity and elegance, diffused
Around the mansion and its whole do-
main;
Not, doubtless, without help of female
taste
And female care.—“A blessed lot is
yours!”
The words escaped his lip, with a tender
sigh
Breathed over them: but suddenly the
door
Flew open, and a pair of lusty Boys
Appeared, confusion checking their de-
light.
—Not brothers they in feature or attire,
But fond companions, so I guessed, in
field,

And by the river's margin—whence they
come,
Keen anglers with unusual spoil elated.
One bears a willow-pannier on his back,
The boy of plainer garb, whose blush
survives
More deeply tinged. Twin might the
other be
To that fair girl who from the garden-
mount
Bounded:—triumphant entry this for
him!
Between his hands he holds a smooth blue
stone,
On whose capacious surface see out-
spread
Large store of gleaming crimson-spotted
trouts;
Ranged side by side, and lessening by
degrees
Up to the dwarf that tops the pinnacle.
Upon the board he lays the sky-blue
stone
With its rich freight; then number he
proclaims;
Tells from what pool the noblest had
been dragged;
And where the very monarch of the
brook,
After long struggle, had escaped at last—
Stealing alternately at them and us
(As doth his comrade too) a look of pride;
And, verily, the silent creatures made
A splendid sight, together thus exposed;
Dead—but not sullied or deformed by
death,
That seemed to pity what he could not
spare.

But O, the animation in the mien
Of those two boys! yea in the very words
With which the young narrator was
inspired,
When, as our questions led, he told at
large
Of that day's prowess! Him might I
compare,
His looks, tones, gestures, eager eloquence,
To a bold brook that splits for better
speed,
And at the self-same moment, works its
way
Through many channels, ever and anon
Parted and re-united: his compeer
To the still lake, whose stillness is to sight
As beautiful—as grateful to the mind.
—But to what object shall the lovely
Girl
Be likened? She whose countenance
and air
Unite the graceful qualities of both,
Even as she shares the pride and joy of
both.

My grey-haired Friend was moved ; his
vivid eye
Glistened with tenderness ; his mind, I
knew
Was full ; and had, I doubted not, re-
turned,
Upon this impulse, to the theme—ere-
while
Abruptly broken off. The ruddy boys
Withdrew, on summons to their well-
earned meal ;

And He—to whom all tongues resigned
their rights
With willingness, to whom the general ear
Listened with readier patience than to
strain
Of music, lute or harp, a long delight
That ceased not when his voice had
ceased—as One [views
Who, from truth's central point serenely
The compass of his argument—began
Mildly, and with a clear and steady tone.

BOOK NINTH

DISCOURSE OF THE WANDERER,
AND AN EVENING VISIT TO
THE LAKE
ARGUMENT

Wanderer asserts that an active principle per-
vades the Universe, its noblest seat the human
soul—How lively this principle is in Child-
hood—Hence the delight in old Age of looking
back upon Childhood—The dignity, powers,
and privileges of Age asserted—These not
to be looked for generally but under a just
government—Right of a human Creature to
be exempt from being considered as a mere
Instrument—The condition of multitudes
deplored—Former conversation recurred to,
and the Wanderer's opinions set in a clearer
light—Truth placed within reach of the
humblest—Equality—Happy state of the
two Boys again adverted to—Earnest wish
expressed for a System of National Education
established universally by Government—
Glorious effects of this foretold—Walk to
the Lake—Grand spectacle from the side of
a hill—Address of Priest to the Supreme
Being—in the course of which he contrasts
with ancient Barbarism the present appear-
ance of the scene before him—The change
ascribed to Christianity—Apostrophe to his
flock, living and dead—Gratitude to the
Almighty—Return over the Lake—Parting
with the Solitary—Under what circum-
stances.

"To every Form of being is assigned,"
Thus calmly spake the venerable Sage,
"An active Principle :—how'er removed
From sense and observation, it subsists
In all things, in all natures ; in the stars
Of azure heaven, the unenduring clouds,
In flower and tree, in every pebbly stone
That paves the brooks, the stationary
rocks,
The moving waters, and the invisible air.
Whatever exists hath properties that
spread
Beyond itself, communicating good,
A simple blessing, or with evil mixed ;
Spirit that knows no insulated spot,

No chasm, no solitude ; from link to link
It circulates, the Soul of all the worlds.
This is the freedom of the universe ;
Unfolded still the more, more visible,
The more we know ; and yet is revered
least,
And least respected in the human Mind,
Its most apparent home. The food of
hope
Is meditated action ; robbed of this
Her sole support, she languishes and dies.
We perish also ; for we live by hope
And by desire ; we see by the glad light
And breathe the sweet air of futurity ;
And so we live, or else we have no life.
To-morrow—nay perchance this very
hour
(For every moment hath its own to-
morrow !)
Those blooming Boys, whose hearts are
almost sick
With present triumph, will be sure to
find
A field before them freshened with the
dew
Of other expectations ;—in which course
Their happy year spins round. The
youth obeys
A like glad impulse ; and so moves the
man
Mid all his apprehensions, cares, and
fears,—
Or so he ought to move. Ah ! why in age
Do we revert so fondly to the walks
Of childhood—but that there the Soul
discerns
The dear memorial footsteps unimpaired
Of her own native vigour ; thence can
hear
Reverberations ; and a choral song.
Commingle with the incense that
ascends,
Undaunted, toward the imperishable
heavens,
From her own lonely altar ?
Do not think

That good and wise ever will be allowed,
Though strength decay, to breathe in
such estate

As shall divide them wholly from the stir
Of hopeful nature. Rightly is it said
That Man descends into the VALE of
years;

Yet have I thought that we might also
speak,

And not presumptuously, I trust, of Age,
As of a final EMINENCE; though bare
In aspect and forbidding, yet a point
On which 'tis not impossible to sit

In awful sovereignty: a place of power,
A throne, that may be likened unto his,
Who, in some placid day of summer,
looks

Down from a mountain-top, —say one of
those

High peaks, that bound the vale where
now we are.

Faint, and diminished to the gazing eye,
Forest and field, and hill and dale ap-
pear,

With all the shapes over their surface
spread:

But, while the gross and visible frame
of things

Relinquishes its hold upon the sense,
Yea almost on the Mind herself, and
seems

All unsubstantialized,—how loud the
voice

Of waters, with invigorated peal
From the full river in the vale below,

Ascending! For on that superior height
Who sits, is disencumbered from the
press

Of near obstructions, and is privileged
To breathe in solitude, above the host
Of ever-humming insects, 'mid thin air
That suits not them. The murmur of
the leaves

Many and idle, visits not his ear.

This he is freed from, and from thousand
notes

(Not less unceasing, not less vain than
these.)

By which the finer passages of sense
Are occupied; and the Soul, that would
incline

To listen, is prevented or deterred.

And may it not be hoped, that, placed
by age

In like removal, tranquil though severe,
We are not so removed for utter loss;

But for some favour, suited to our need?

What more than that the severing should
confer

Fresh power to commune with the in-
visible world,

And hear the mighty stream of tendency

Uttering, for elevation of our thought,
A clear sonorous voice, inaudible
To the vast multitude; whose doom it is
To run the giddy round of vain delight,
Or fret and labour on the Plain below.

But, if to such sublime ascent the
hopes

Of Man may rise, as to a welcome close
And termination, of his mortal course:

Them only can such hope inspire whose
minds

Have not been starved, by absolute
neglect;

Nor bodies crushed by unremitting toil,
To whom kind Nature, therefore, may
afford

Proof of the sacred love, she bears for all;
Whose birthright Reason, therefore,

may ensure.

For me, consulting what I feel within
In times when most existence with her-
self

Is satisfied, I cannot but believe,
That, far as kindly Nature hath free

scope
And Reason's sway predominates; even
so far,

Country, society, and time itself,
That saps the individual's bodily frame,

And lays the generations low in dust,
Do, by the almighty Ruler's grace, par-
take

Of one maternal spirit, bringing forth
And cherishing with ever-constant love,

That tires not, nor betrays. Our life is
turned

Our of her course, wherever man is made
An offering, or a sacrifice, a tool

Or implement, a passive thing employed
As a brute mean, without acknowledg-
ment

Of common right or interest in the end;
Used or abused, as selfishness may prompt.

Say, what can follow for a rational soul
Perverted thus, but weakness in all good,
And strength in evil? Hence an after-
call

For chastisement, and custody, and
bonds,

And oft-times Death, avenger of the past,
And the sole guardian in whose hands we
dare

Entrust the future.—Not for these sad
issues

Was Man created; but to obey the law
Of life, and hope, and action. And 'tis
known

That when we stand upon our native soil,
Unelbowed by such objects as oppress

Our active powers, those powers them-
selves become

Strong to subvert our noxious qualities:

They sweep distemper from the busy day,
And make the chalice of the big round
year
Run o'er with gladness; whence the
Being moves
In beauty through the world; and all
who see
Bless him, rejoicing in his neighbour-
hood."

"Then," said the Solitary, "by what
force
Of language shall a feeling heart express
Her sorrow for that multitude in whom
We look for health from seeds that have
been sown
In sickness, and for increase in a power
That works but by extinction? On
themselves.
They cannot lean, nor turn to their own
hearts
To know what they must do: their
wisdom is
To look into the eyes of others, thence
To be instructed what they must avoid:
Or rather, let us say, how least observed,
How with most quiet and most silent
death
With the least taint and injury to the air
The oppressor breathes, their human
form divine,
And their immortal soul, may waste
away."

The Sage rejoined, "I thank you—
you have spared
My voice the utterance of a keen regret,
A wide compassion which with you I
share.
When, heretofore, I placed before your
sight
A Little-one, subjected to the arts
Of modern ingenuity, and made
The senseless member of a vast machine,
Serving as doth a spindle or a wheel;
Think not, that, pitying him, I could
forget [taught;
The rustic Boy, who walks the fields, un-
The slave of ignorance, and oft of want,
And miserable hunger. Much, too much,
Of this unhappy lot, in early youth
We both have witnessed, lot which I
myself
Shared, though in mild and merciful
degree:
Yet was the mind to hinderances ex-
posed,
Through which I struggled, not without
distress
And sometimes injury, like a lamb en-
thralled
Mid thorns and brambles; or a bird that
breaks

Through a strong net, and mounts upon
the wind,
Though with her plumes impaired. If
they, whose souls
Should open while they range the richer
fields
Of merry England, are obstructed less
By indigence, their ignorance is not less,
Nor less to be deplored. For who can
doubt
That tens of thousands at this day exist
Such as the boy you painted, lineal heirs
Of those who once were vassals of her
sail,
Following its fortunes like the beasts or
trees
Which it sustained. But no one takes
delight
In this oppression; none are proud of it;
It bears no sounding name, nor ever bore;
A standing grievance, an indigenous vice
Of every country under heaven. My
thoughts
Were turned to evils that are new and
chosen,
A bondage lurking under shape of good,—
Arts, in themselves beneficent and kind,
But all too fondly followed and too far;—
To victims, which the merciful can see
Nor think that they are victims—turned
to wrongs,
By women, who have children of their
own,
Beheld without compassion, yea with
praise!
I spake of mischief by the wise diffused
With gladness, thinking that the more
it spreads
The healthier, the securer, we become;
Delusion which a moment may destroy!
Lastly, I mourned for those whom I had
seen
Corrupted and cast down, on favoured
ground,
Where circumstance and nature had
combined
To shelter innocence, and cherish love;
Who, but for this intrusion, would have
lived,
Possessed of health, and strength, and
peace of mind:
Thus would have lived, or never have
been born.
Alas! what differs more than man
from man!
And whence that difference? whence but
from himself?
For see the universal Race endowed
With the same upright form!—The sun
is fixed,
And the infinite magnificence of heaven
Fixed, within reach of every human eye;

The sleepless ocean murmurs for all ears;
The vernal field infuses fresh delight
Into all hearts. Throughout the world
Of sense,

Even as an object is sublime or fair,
That object is laid open to the view
Without reserve or veil; and as a power
Is salutary, or an influence sweet,
Are each and all enabled to perceive
That power, that influence, by impartial
law.

Gifts nobler are vouchsafed alike to all;
Reason, and, with that reason, smiles and
tears;

Imagination, freedom in the will;
Conscience to guide and check; and
death to be

Foretasted, immortality conceived
By all,—a blissful immortality.

To them whose holiness on earth shall
make

The Spirit capable of heaven, assured.
Strange, then, nor less than monstrous,
might be deemed

The failure, if the Almighty, to this
point

Liberal and undistinguishing, should hide
The excellence of moral qualities
From common understanding; leaving
truth

And virtue, difficult, abstruse, and dark;
Hard to be won, and only by a few;
Strange, should He deal herein with nice
respects,

And frustrate all the rest! Believe it
not:

The primal duties shine aloft—like stars;
The charities that soothe, and heal, and
bless,

Are scattered at the feet of Man—like
flowers.

The generous inclination, the just rule,
Kind wishes, and good actions, and pure
thoughts—

No mystery is here! Here is no boog
For high—yet not for low; for proudly
graced—

Yet not for meek of heart. The smoke
ascends

To heaven as lightly from the cottage-
hearth

As from the haughtiest palace. He,
whose soul

Ponders this true equality, may walk
The fields of earth with gratitude and
hope;

Yet, in that meditation, will he find
Motive to sadder grief, as we have found;
Lamenting ancient virtues overthrown,
And for the injustice grieving, that hath
made

So wide a difference between man and
man.

Then let us rather fix our gladdened
thoughts

Upon the brighter scene. How blest
that pair

Of blooming Boys (whom we beheld even
now)

Blest in their several and their common
lot!

A few short hours of each returning day
The thriving prisoners of the village-
school:

And thence let loose, to seek the
pleasant fields

Or range the grassy lawn in vacancy;
To breathe and to be happy, run and
shout

Idle,—but no delay, no harm, no loss;
For every genial power of heaven and
earth,

Through all the seasons of the changeful
year,

Obsequiously doth take upon herself,
To labour for them; bringing each in
turn

The tribute of enjoyment, knowledge,
health,

Beauty, or strength! Such privilege
is theirs,

Granted alike in the outset of their course
To both; and, if that partnership must
cease,

I grieve not," to the Pastor here he
turned.

"Much as I glory in that child of yours,
Repine not for his cottage-comrade,
whom

Belike no higher destiny awaits
Than the old hereditary wish fulfilled;
The wish for liberty to live—content
With what Heaven grants, and die—in
peace of mind,

Within the bosom of his native vale.
At least, whatever fate the noon of life
Reserves for either, sure it is that both

Have been permitted to enjoy the dawn;—
Whether regarded as a jocund time,
That in itself may terminate, or lead

In course of nature to a sober eve.
Both have been fairly dealt with; look-
ing back

They will allow that justice has in them
Been shown, alike to body and to mind."

He paused, as if revolving in his soul
Some weighty matter; then, with
fervent voice

And an impassioned majesty, exclaimed—

"O for the coming of that glorious
time

When, prizeing knowledge as her noblest
wealth

And best protection, this imperial Realm,

While she exacts allegiance, shall admit
An obligation, on her parts to teach
Them who are born to serve her and obey;
Binding herself by statute to secure
For all the children whom her soil main-
tains

The rudiments of letters, and inform
The mind with moral and religious truth,
Both understood and practised,—so that
now

However destitute, be left to droop
By timely culture unsustained: or run
Into a wild disorder, be forced
To drudge through a weary life without
the help

Of intellectual implements and tools;
A savage horde among the civilised,
A servile band among the lordly free!
This sacred right, the lisping babe pro-
claims

To be inherent in him, by Heaven's will,
For the protection of his innocence;
And the rude boy—who, having overpast
The sinless age, by conscience is enrolled,
Yet mutinously knits his angry brow,
And lifts his wilful hand on mischief bent,
Or turns the godlike faculty of speech
To impious use,—by process indirect
Declares his due, while he makes known
his need

—This sacred right is fruitlessly an-
nounced.

This universal plea in vain addressed,
To eyes and ears of parents who them-
selves

Did, in the time of their necessity,
Urge it in vain; and, therefore, like a
prayer

That from the humblest floor ascends to
heaven, [ear;

It mounts to reach the State's parental
Who, if indeed she own a mother's heart,
And be not most unfeelingly devoid
Of gratitude to Providence, will grant
The unquestionable good—which, Eng-
land, safe

From interference of external force,
May grant at leisure; without risk in-
curred

That what in wisdom for herself she doth,
Others shall e'er be able to undo.

Look! and Behold, from Calpe's sun-
burnt cliffs

To the flat margin of the Baltic sea,
Long-reverenced titles cast away as
weeds;

Laws overturned; and territory split,
Like fields of ice rent by the polar wind,
And forced to join in less obnoxious
shapes

Which, ere they gain consistence, by a
gust

Of the name breath are shattered and
destroyed.

Meantime the sovereignty of these fair
Isles

Remains entire and indivisible:
And, if that ignorance were removed,
which breeds

Within the compass of their several
shores

Dark-discontent, or loud commotion,
each

Might still preserve the beautiful repose
Of heavenly bodies shining in their
spheres.

—The discipline of slavery is unknown
Among us,—hence the more do we re-
quire

The discipline of virtue; order else
Cannot subsist, nor confidence, nor peace.
Thus, duties rising out of good pos-
sessed And prudent caution needful to avert
Impending evil, equally require
That the whole people should be taught
and trained.

So shall licentiousness and black resolve
Be rooted out, and virtuous habits take
Their place; and genuine piety descend,
Like an inheritance, from age to age.

With such foundations laid, avaunt
the fear

Of numbers crowded on their native
soil.

To the prevention of all healthful growth
Through mutual injury! Rather in the
law

Of increase and the mandate from above
Rejoice!—and ye have special cause for
joy.

—For, as the element of air affords
An easy passage to the industrious bees
Fraught with their burthens; and a
way as smooth

For those ordained to take their sounding
flight

From the thronged hive, and settle
where they list

In fresh abodes—their labour to renew;
So the wide waters, open to the power,
The will, the instincts, and appointed
needs

Of Britain, do invite her to cast off
Her swarms, and in succession send them
forth;

Bound to establish new communities
On every shore whose aspect favours hope
Or bold adventure; promising to skill
And perseverance their deserved reward.

Yes," he continued, kindling as he
spake,

"Change wide, and deep, and silently
performed,

This Land shall witness ; and as days
roll on,
Earth's universal frame shall feel the
effect ;

Even till the smallest habitable rock,
Beaten by lonely billows, hear the songs
Of humanised society ; and bloom
With civil arts, that shall breathe forth
their fragrance,

A grateful tribute to all-ruling Heaven
From culture, unexclusively bestowed
On Albion's noble Race in freedom born,
Expect these mighty issues : from the
pains

And faithful care of unambitious schools
Instructing simple childhood's ready
ear :

Thence look for these magnificent results !
—Vast the circumference of hope—and ye
Are at its centre, British Lawgivers ;
Ah ! sleep not there in shame ! Shall
Wisdom's voice

From out the bosom of these troubled
times

Repeat the dictates of her calmer mind,
And shall the venerable halls ye fill
Refuse to echo the sublime decree ?
Trust not to partial care a general good ;

Transfer not to futurity a work
Of urgent need.—Your Country must
complete

Her glorious destiny. Begin even now,
Now, when oppression, like the Egyptian
plague

Of darkness, stretched o'er guilty Europe,
makes

The brightness more conspicuous that
invests

The happy Island where ye think and
act ;

Now, when destruction is a prime pur-
suit,

Show to the wretched nations for what
end

The powers of civil polity were given."

Abruptly here, but with a graceful
air,

The Sage broke off. No sooner had he
ceased

Than, looking forth, the gentle Lady said,
" Behold the shades of afternoon have
fallen

Upon this flowery slope ; and see—
beyond—

The silvery lake is streaked with placid
blue ;

As if preparing for the peace of evening.
How temptingly the landscape shines !

The air
Breathes invitation ; easy is the walk
To the lake's margin, where a boat lies
moored

Under a sheltering tree."—Upon this
hint

We rose together : all were pleased ; but
most

The beautiful girl, whose cheek was
flushed with joy.

Light as a sunbeam glides along the hills
She vanished,—eager to impart the scheme

To her loved brother and his shy com-
peer.

—Now was there bustle in the Vicar's
house

And earnest preparation.—Forth we
went,

And down the vale along the streamlet's
edge

Pursued our way, a broken company,
Myte or conversing, single or in pairs.

Thus having reached a bridge, that
overarched

The hasty rivulet where it lay becalmed
In a deep pool, by happy chance we saw

A two-fold image : on a grassy bank
A snow-white ram, and in the crystal
flood

Another and the same ! Most beautiful,
On the green turf, with his imperial
front

Shaggy and bold, and wreathed horns
superb,

The breathing creature stood ; 'as
beautiful,

Beneath him, shewed his shadowy
counterpart.

Each had his glowing mountains, each
his sky,

And each seemed centre of his own fair
world :

Antipodes unconscious of each other,
Yet, in partition, with their several
spheres,

Blended in perfect stillness, to our sight !

" Ah ! what a pity were it to disperse,
Or to disturb, so fair a spectacle,

And yet a breath can do it !"

These few words,
The Lady whispered, while we stood and
gazed

Gathered together, all in still delight,
Not without awe. Thence passing on,
she said

In like low voice to my particular ear,
" I love to hear that eloquent old Man
Pour forth his meditations, and descant
On human life from infancy to age.

How pure his spirit ! in what vivid hues
His mind gives back the various forms
of things,

Caught in their fairest, happiest, attitude !
While he is speaking, I have power to see
Even as he sees ; but when his voice hath
ceased,

Then, with a sigh, sometimes I feel, as
 now,
 That combinations so serene and bright
 Cannot be lasting in a world like ours,
 Whose highest beauty, beautiful as it is,
 Like that reflected in yon quiet pool,
 Seems but a fleeting sun-beam's gift,
 whose peace
 The sufferance only of a breath of air !

More had she said—but sportive shouts,
 were heard
 Sent from the jocund hearts of those two
 Boys,

Who, bearing each a basket on his arm,
 Down the green field came tripping after
 —.

With caution, we embarked; and now
 the pair

For prouder service were address;
 but each,

Wishful to leave an opening for my
 choice.

Dropped the light oar his eager hand had
 seized.

Thanks given for that becoming courtesy,
 Their place I took—and for a grateful
 office

Pregnant with recollections of the time
 When, on thy bosom, spacious Winder-
 mere !

A Youth, I practised this delightful art ;
 Tossed on the waves alone, or 'mid a
 crew

Of joyous comrades. Soon as the reedy
 margin

Was cleared, I dipped, with arms ac-
 cordant, oars

Free from obstruction ; and the boat
 advanced

Through crystal water, smoothly as a
 hawk,

That, disentangled from the shady
 boughs

Of some thick wood, her place of covert ;
 cleaves

With correspondent wings the abyss of
 air.

—“ Observe,” the Vicar said, “ yon
 rocky isle

With birch-trees fringed ; my hand shall
 guide the helm,

While thitherward we shape our course ;
 or while

We seek that other, on the western shore ;
 Where the bare columns of those lofty
 firs,

Supporting gracefully a massy dome
 Of sombre foliage, seem to imitate

A Grecian temple rising from the Deep.”

“ Turn where we may,” said I, “ we
 cannot err

W. P.

In this delicious region.”—Cultured
 slopes,

Wild tracts of forest-ground, and scat-
 tered groves,

And mountains bare, or clothed with
 ancient woods,

Surrounded us ; and, as we held our way
 Along the level of the glassy flood,

They ceased not to surround us ; change
 of place,

From kindred features diversely com-
 bined,

Producing change of beauty ever new.
 —Ah ! that such beauty, varying in the

light
 Of living nature, cannot be portrayed
 By words, nor by the pencil's silent

skill ;
 But is the property of him alone
 Who hath beheld it, noted it with care,

And in his mind recorded it with love !
 Suffice it, therefore, if the rural Muse

Vouchsafe sweet influence, while her
 Poet speaks

Of trivial occupations well devised,
 And unsought pleasures springing up by

chance ;
 As if some friendly Genius had ordained
 That, as the day thus far had been en-

riched
 By acquisition of sincere delight,
 The same should be continued to its close.

One spirit animating old and young,
 A gipsy-fire we kindled on the shore

Of the fair Isle with birch-trees fringed—
 and there,

Merrily seated in a ring, partook
 A choice repast—served by our young

companions
 With rival earnestness and kindred glee.
 Launched from our hands the smooth

stone skimmed the lake ;
 With shouts we raised the echoes ;—
 stiller sounds

The lovely Girl supplied—a simple song.
 Whose low tones reached not to the dis-

tant rocks
 To be repeated thence, but gently sank
 Into our hearts ; and charmed the peace-

ful flood.
 Rapaciously we gathered flowery spoils
 From land and water ; lilies of each hue—

Golden and white, that float upon the
 waves,

And court the wind ; and leaves of that
 shy plant,

(Her flowers were shed) the lily of the
 vale,

That loves the ground, and from the sun
 withholds

Her pensive beauty ; from the breeze her
 sweets.

Such product, and such pastime, did
the place
And season yield; but, as we re-em-
barked,
Leaving, in quest of other scenes, the
shore
Of that wild spot, the Solitary said
In low voice, yet careless who might
hear,
"The fire, that burned so brightly to our
wish,
Where is it now?—Deserted on the
beach—
Dying, or dead! Nor shall the fauning
breeze
Revive its ashes. What care we for this,
are gained? Behold an em-
blem here
Of one day's pleasure, and all mortal
joys!
And, in this unpremeditated sight
Of that which is no longer needed, see
The common course of human grati-
tude!"

This plaintive note disturbed not the
repose
Of the still evening. Right across the
lake
Our pinnacle moves; then, coasting creek
and bay,
Glades we behold, and into thickets peep,
Where couch the spotted deer; or raised
our eyes
To shaggy steeps on which the careless
goat
Browsed by the side of dashing water-
falls;
And thus the bark, meandering with the
shore,
Pursued her voyage, till a natural pier
Of jutting rock invited us to land.

Alert to follow us the Pastor led,
We clomb a green hill's side; and, as we
clomb,
The Valley, opening out her bosom, gave
Fair prospect, intercepted less and less,
O'er the flat meadows and indented coast
Of the smooth lake, in compass seen:—
far off,
And yet conspicuous, stood the old
Church-tower,
In majesty presiding over fields
And habitations seemingly preserved
From all intrusion of the restless world
By rocks impassable and mountains huge.

Soft heath this elevated spot supplied,
And choise of moss-clad stones, whereon
we couched
Or sate reclined; admiring quietly
The general aspect of the scene; but each

Not seldom over anxious to make known
His own discoveries; or, to favourite
points
Directing notice, merely from a wish
To impart a joy, imperfect while un-
shared.
That rapturous moment never shall I
forget
When these particular interests, were
effaced
From every mind!—Already had the sun,
Sinking with less than an ordinary state,
Attained his western bound; but rays
of light—
Now suddenly diverging from the orb
Retired behind the mountain-tops, or
veiled
By the dense air—shot upwards to the
crown
Of the blue firmament—aloft, and wide:
And multitudes of little floating clouds,
Through their ethereal texture pierced—
ere we,
Who saw, of change were conscious—had
become
Vivid as fire; clouds separately poised,—
Innumerable multitude of forms
Scattered through half the circle of the
sky;
And giving back, and shedding each one
each,
With prodigal communion, the bright
hues
Which from the unapparent fount of
glory
They had imbibed, and ceased not to
receive.
That which the heavens displayed, the
liquid deep
Repeated; but with unity sublime!

While from the grassy mountain's open
side
We gazed, in silence hushed, with eyes
intent
On the refulgent spectacle, diffused
Through earth, sky, water, and all visible
space,
The Priest in holy transport thus ex-
claimed:

"Eternal Spirit! universal God!
Power inaccessible to human thought,
Save by degrees and steps which thou
hast deigned
To furnish; for this effluence of thyself,
To the infirmity of mortal sense
Vouchsafed; this local transitory type
Of thy paternal splendours, and the pomp
Of those who fill thy courts in highest
heaven,
The radiant Cherubim;—accept the
thanks

Which we, thy humble Creatures, here
 convened,
 Presume to offer; we, who from the
 breast
 Of the frail earth, permitted to behold
 The faint reflections only of thy face—
 Are yet exalted, and in soul adore!
 Such as they are who in thy presence
 stand
 Unsullied, incorruptible, and drink
 Imperishable majesty streamed forth
 From thy empyreal throne, the flect of
 earth
 Shall be—divested at the appointed hour
 Of all dishonour, cleansed from mortal
 stain.
 —Accomplish, then, their number: and
 conclude
 Time's weary course! Or if, by thy
 decree,
 The consummation that will come by
 stealth
 Be yet far distant, let thy Word prevail.
 Oh! let the Word prevail, to take away
 The sting of human nature. Spread the
 law,
 As it is written in thy holy book,
 Throughout all lands: let every nation
 hear
 The high chest, and every heart obey:
 Both for the love of purity, and hope
 Which it affords, to such as do thy will
 And persevere in good, that they shall
 rise,
 To have a nearer view of thee, in heaven.
 —Father of good! this prayer in bounty
 grant
 In mercy grant it, to thy wretched sons.
 Then, nor till then, shall persecution
 cease,
 And cruel wars expire. The way is
 marked.
 The guide appointed, and the ransom
 paid.
 Alas! the nations, who of yore received
 These tidings, and in Christian temples
 meet
 The sacred truth to acknowledge, linger
 still;
 Preferring bonds and darkness to a state
 Of holy freedom, by redeeming love
 Proffered to all, while yet on earth de-
 tained.
 •So fare the many; and the thoughtful
 few,
 Who in the anguish of their souls bewail
 This dire perverseness, cannot choose but
 ask,
 Shall it endure?—Shall enmity and strife,
 Falsehood and guile, be left to sow their
 seed;
 And the kind never perish? Is the hope

Fallacious, or shall righteousness obtain
 A peaceable dominion, wide as earth,
 And ne'er to fail? Shall that blest day
 arrive
 When they, whose choice or lot it is to
 dwell
 In crowded cities, without fear shall live
 studious of mutual benefit; and he,
 Whom Morn awakens, among dews and
 flowers
 Of every clime, to till the lonely field,
 Be happy in himself?—The law of faith
 Working through love, such conquest
 shall it gain,
 Such triumph over sin and guilt achieve?
 Almighty Lord, thy further grace impart!
 And with that help the wonder shall be
 seen
 Fulfilled, the hope accomplished: and
 thy praise
 Be sung with transport and unceasing joy.
 Once, and with mild demeanour, as
 he spake,
 On us the venerable Pastor turned
 His beaming eye that had been raised to
 Heaven,
 "Once, while the Name, Jehovah, was
 a sound
 Within the circuit of this sea-girt isle
 Unheard, the savage nations bowed the
 head
 To Gods delighting in remorseless deeds;
 Gods which themselves had fashioned, to
 promote
 Ill purposes, and flatter foul desires.
 Then, in the bosom of yon mountain-cove,
 To those inventions of corrupted man
 Mysterious rites were solemnised; and
 there—
 Amid impending rocks and gloomy
 woods—
 Of those terrific Idols some received
 Such dismal service, that the loudest
 voice
 Of the swoln cataracts (which now are
 heard
 Soft murmuring) was too weak to over-
 come,
 Though aided by wild winds, the groans
 and shrieks
 Of human victims, offered up to appease
 Or to propitiate. And, if living eyes
 Had visionary faculties to see
 The thing that hath been as the thing
 that is,
 Aghast we might behold this crystal Mere
 Bedimmed with smoke, in wreaths vol-
 uminous,
 Flung from the body of devouring fires,
 To Taranis erected on the heights
 By priestly hands, for sacrifice performed
 Exultingly, in view of open day

And full assemblage of a barbarous host;
Or to Andantes, female Power ! who gave
(For so they fancied) glorious victory.

—A few rude monuments of mountain-
stone

Survive ; all else is swept away.—How
bright

The appearances of things ! From such
how changed

The existing worship ; and with those
compared,

The worshippers how innocent and blest !
So wide the difference, a willing mind
Might almost think, at this affecting hour,
That paradise, the lost abode of man,
Was raised again : and to a happy few,
In its original beauty, here restored.

Whence but from thee, the true and
only God,
And from the faith derived through Him
who bled

Upon the cross, this marvellous advance
Of good from evil ; as if one extreme
Were left, the other gained.—O ye, who
come

To kneel devoutly in yon reverend Pile,
Called to such office by the peaceful
sound

Of sabbath bells ; and ye, who sleep in
earth,

All cares forgotten, round its hallowed
walls !

For you, in presence of this little band
Gathered together on the green hill-side,
Your Pastor is emboldened to prefer
Vocal thanksgivings to the eternal King :
Whose love, whose counsel, whose com-
mands, have made

Your very poorest rich in peace of
thought

And in good works ; and him, who is en-
dowed

With scantiest knowledge, master of all
truth

Which the salvation of his soul requires.
Conscious of that abundant favour
showered

On you, the children of my humble care,
And this dear land, our country, while on
earth

We sojourn, have I lifted up my soul,
Joy giving voice to fervent gratitude.
These barren rocks, your stern inheri-
tance ;

These fertile fields, that recompense your
pains ;

The shadowy vale, the sunny mountain-
top ;

Woods waving in the wind their lofty
heads,

Or hushed ; the roaring waters, and the
still—

They see the offering of my lifted hands,
They hear my lips present their sacrifice,
They know if I be silent, morn or even :
For, though in whispers speaking, the full
heart

Will find a vent ; and thought is "praise
to him,

Audible praise, to thee, omniscient Mind,
From whom all gifts descend, all blessings
flow !"

This vesper-service closed, without de-
lay,

From that exalted station to the plain
Descending, we pursued our homeward
course,

In mute composure, o'er the shadowy
lake,

Under a faded sky. No trace remained
Of those celestial splendours ; grey the
vault—

Pure, cloudless ether ; and the star of
eve

Was wanting ; but inferior lights ap-
peared

Faintly, too faint almost for sight ; and
some

Above the darkened hill, stood boldly
forth

In twinkling lustre, ere the boat attained
Her mooring-place ; where, to the shel-
tering tree,

Our youthful Voyagers bound fast her
prow,

With prompt yet careful hands. This
done, we paced

The dewy fields ; but ere the Vicar's door
Was reached, the Solitary checked his
steps ;

Then, intermingling thanks, on each
bestowed

A farewell salutation ; and, the like
Receiving, took the slender path that
leads

To the one cottage in the lonely dell :
But turned not without welcome promise
made

That he would share the pleasures and
pursuits

Of yet another summer's day, not loth
To wander with us through the fertile
vales,

And o'er the mountain-wastes. "An-
other sun,"

Said he, "shall shine upon us, ere we
part ;

Another sun, and peradventure more ;
If time, with free consent, be yours to
give,

And season favours."

To enfeebled Power,
From this communion with uninjured
Minds,

What renovation had been brought;
 and what
 Degree of healing to a wounded spirit,
 Dejected, and habitually disposed
 To seek, in degradation of the Kind,
 Excuse and solace for her own defects;
 How far those erring notions were re-
 formed;
 And whether aught, of tendency as good

And pure, from further intercourse en-
 sued;
 This—if delightful hopes, as heretofore,
 Inspire the serious song, and gentle
 Hearts
 Cherish, and lofty Minds approve the
 past—
 My future labours may not leave un-
 told.

ADDITIONAL POEMS

GIORDANO verily thy Pencil's skill
 Hath here portrayed with Nature's
 happiest grace
 The fair Endymion couched on Latmos-
 hill;
 And Dian gazing on the Shepherd's face
 In rapture,—yet suspending her embrace.
 As not unconscious with what power
 the thrill
 Of her most timid touch his sleep would
 chase.
 And, with his sleep, that beauty calm
 and still.
 May this work have found its last
 retreat
 Here in a mountain-Bard's secure abode.
 One to whom, yet a School-boy, Cyn-
 this showed
 A face of love which he in love would
 greet,
 Fixed, by her smile, upon some rocky
 seat:
 Or lured along where green-wood paths
 he trod.

RYDAL MOUNT, 1846.

Who but is pleased to watch the moon
 on high
 Travelling where she from time to time
 enshrouds
 Her head, and nothing loth her Majesty
 Renounces, till among the scattered
 clouds
 One with its kindling edge declares that
 soon
 Will reappear before the uplifted eye
 A Form as bright, as beautiful a moon,
 To glide in open prospect through
 clear sky.
 Pity that such a promise e'er should
 prove
 False in the issue, that you seeing
 space
 Of sky, should be in truth the steadfast
 face
 Of a cloud flat and dense, through which
 must move,
 (By transit not unlike man's frequent
 doom)
 The wanderer lost in more determined
 gloom!

1846.

WHERE lies the truth? has Man, in
 wisdom's creed
 A pitiable doom; for respite brief
 A care more anxious, or a heavier
 grief?
 Is he ungrateful, and doth little heed
 God's bounty, soon forgotten; or in-
 deed,
 Must Man, with labour born, awake to
 sorrow
 When flowers rejoice and Larks with
 rival speed
 Spring from their nests to bid the Sun
 good morrow?
 They mount for rapture as their songs
 proclaim
 Warbled in hearing both of earth and sky;
 But o'er the contrast wherefore heave a
 sigh?
 Like those aspirants let us soar—our aim,
 Through life's worst trials, whether
 shocks or snares,
 A happier, brighter, purer Heaven
 than theirs. 1846.

ILLUSTRATED BOOKS AND NEWSPAPERS.
 DISCOURSE was deemed Man's noblest
 attribute,
 And written words the glory of his hand:
 Then followed Printing with enlarged
 command
 For thought—dominion vast and abso-
 lute
 For spreading truth, and making love
 expand.
 Now prose and verse sunk into disrepute
 Must lacquey a dumb Art that best can
 suit
 The taste of this once-intellectual
 Land.
 A backward movement surely have
 we here,
 From manhood—back to childhood;
 for the age—
 Back towards caverned life's first rude
 career.
 Avaunt this vile abuse of pictured page!
 Must eyes be all in all, the tongue and
 ear
 Nothing? Heaven keep us from a lower
 stage! 1846.

THE unremitting voice of nightly streams
 That waste so oft, we think, its tuneful
 powers,
 If neither soothing to the worm that
 gleams
 Through dewy grass, nor small birds
 hushed in bowers,
 Nor unto silent leaves and drowsy
 flowers,—
 The voice of unpretending harmony
 (For who what is shall measure by what
 seems
 To be, or not to be,
 Or tax high Heaven with prodigality?)
 Once not a healing influence that can
 creep
 Into the human breast, and mix with
 sleep
 To regulate the motion of our dreams
 For kindly issues—as through every clime
 Was felt near murmuring brooks in
 earliest time :
 As at this day, the rudest swains who
 dwell
 Where torrents roar, or hear the tinkling
 knell
 Of water-breaks, with grateful heart
 could tell.

1846.

I know an aged Man constrained to
 dwell
 In a large house of public charity,
 Where he abides, as in a Prisoner's cell,
 With numbers near, alas ! no company.
 When he could creep about, at will,
 though poor
 And forced to live on alms, this old
 Man fed
 A Redbreast, one that to his cottage door
 Came not, but in a lane partook his
 bread.
 There, at the root of one particular tree,
 An easy seat this worn-out Labourer
 found
 While Robin pecked the crumbs upon
 his knee
 Laid one by one, or scattered on the
 ground.
 Dear intercourse was theirs, day after
 day ;
 What signs of mutual gladness when
 they met !
 Think of their common peace, their
 simple play,
 The parting moment and its fond
 regret.
 Months passed in love that failed not to
 fulfil,
 In spite of season's change, its own
 demand,

By fluttering pinions here and busy bill !
 There by caresses from a tremulous
 hand . . .

Thus in the chosen spot a tie so strong
 Was formed between the solitary pair,
 That when his fate had housed him mid
 a throng
 The Captive shunned all converse
 proffered there.

Wife, children, kindred, they were dead
 and gone ;

But, if no evil had his wishes crossed,
 One living Stay was left, and on that one
 Some recompense for all that he had
 lost.

O that the good old Man had power
 to prove,

By message sent through air or visible
 token,

That still he loves the Bird, and still must
 love :

That friendship lasts though fellowship
 is broken !

1846.

TO AN OCTOGENARIAN.

AFFECTIONS lose their objects ; Time
 brings forth

No successors ; and, lodged in memory,
 If love exist no longer, it must die,—

Wanting accustomed food must pass
 from earth,

Or never hope to reach a second birth.
 This sad belief, the happiest that is
 left

To thousands, share not thou ;, howe'er
 bereft,

Scorned, or neglected, fear not such a
 dearth.

Though poor and destitute of friends
 thou art,

Perhaps the sole survivor of thy race,
 One to whom Heaven assigns that

mournful part
 The utmost solitude of age to face,

Still shall be left some corner of the heart,
 Where Love for living Thing can find a
 place.

1846.

How beautiful the Queen of Night, on
 high
 Her way pursuing among scattered clouds,
 Where, ever and anon, her head she
 shrouds

Hidden from view in dense obscurity.
 But look, and to the watchful eye
 A brightening edge will indicate that
 soon

We shall behold the struggling Moon
 Break forth,—again to walk the clear
 blue sky.

Why should we weep or mourn,—
 Angelic boy,
 For such thou wert ere from our sight
 removed,
 Holy, and ever dutiful—beloved
 From day to day with never-ceasing
 joy,
 And hopes as dear as could the heart
 employ
 In aught to earth pertaining? Death has
 proved
 His might, or less his mercy, as beloved—
 Death conscious that he only could
 destroy
 The bodily frame. That beauty is laid
 low
 To moulder in a far-off field of Rome;
 But Heaven is now, blest Child, thy
 Spirit's home:
 When such choice communion which we
 know,
 Is felt, thy Roman burial-place will be
 Surely a sweet remembrancer of Thee.

1846.

LINES PRINTED AT THE END OF A "POST-
 SCRIPT" IN 1835, FROM MSS. WRITTEN
 MORE THAN THIRTY YEARS EARLIER.

Here might I pause, and bend in
 reverence
 To Nature, and the power of human
 minds;
 To men as they are men within them-
 selves.
 How oft high service is performed
 within,
 When all the external man is rude in
 show;
 Not like a temple rich with pomp and
 gold,
 But a mere mountain chapel that
 protects
 Its simple worshippers from sun and
 shower!
 Of these, said I, shall be my song; of
 these,
 If future years mature me for the task,
 Will I record the praises, making verse
 Deal boldly with substantial things—
 in truth
 And sanctity of passion, speak of these,
 That justice may be done, obeisance
 paid
 Where it is due. Thus haply shall I
 teach
 Inspite, through unadulterated ears
 Pour rapture, tenderness, and hope;
 my theme
 No other than the very heart of man,
 As found among the best of those who
 live,

Not unexalted by religious faith,
 Nor uninformed by books, good books,
 though few,
 In Nature's presence: thence may I
 select
 Sorrow that is not sorrow, but delight,
 And miserable love that is not pain
 To hear of, for the glory that redounds
 Therefrom to human kind, and what
 we are.
 Be mine to follow with no timid step
 Where knowledge leads me; it shall be
 my pride
 That I have dared to tread this holy
 ground,
 Speaking no dream, but things oracular,
 Matter not lightly to be heard by those
 Who to the letter of the outward
 promise
 Do read the invisible soul; by men
 adroit
 In speech, and for communion with
 the world,
 Accomplished, minds whose faculties
 are then
 Most active when they are most elo-
 quent,
 And elevated most when most admired.
 Men may be found of other mould than
 these;
 Who are their own upholders, to them-
 selves
 Encouragement and energy, and will;
 Expressing liveliest thoughts in lively
 words
 As native passion dictates. Others, too,
 There are, among the walks of homely
 life,
 Still higher, men for contemplation
 framed;
 Shy, and unpractised in the strife of
 phrase;
 Meek men, whose very souls perhaps
 would sink
 Beneath them, summoned to such in-
 tercourse.
 Theirs is the language of the heavens,
 the power,
 The thought, the image, and the silent
 joy:
 Words are but under-agents in their
 souls;
 When they are grasping with their
 greatest strength
 They do not breathe among them; this
 I speak
 In gratitude to God, who feeds our
 hearts
 For His own service, knoweth, loveth
 us,
 When we are unregarded by the world.

NOTES

Page 30.

"The Borderers."

This Dramatic Piece was composed in 1795-6. It lay nearly from that time unregarded among my papers, without being mentioned even to my most intimate friends. Having, however, impressions upon my mind which made me unwilling to destroy the MS., I determined to undertake the responsibility of publishing it during my own life, rather than impose upon my successors the task of deciding its fate. Accordingly it has been revised with some care; but, as it was at first written, and is now published, without any view to its exhibition upon the stage, not the slightest alteration has been made in the conduct of the story, or the composition of the characters; above all, in respect to the two leading persons of the drama, I felt no inducement to make any change. The study of human nature suggests this awful truth, that, as in the trials to which life subjects us, sin and crime are apt to start from their very opposite qualities, so are there no limits to the hardening of the heart, and the perversion of the understanding to which they may carry their slaves. During my long residence in France, while the Revolution was rapidly advancing to its extreme of wickedness, I had frequent opportunities of being an eye-witness of this process, and it was while that knowledge was fresh upon my memory, that the Tragedy of "The Borderers" was composed.

Page 75.

"The Poet's Dream."

"Among ancient Trees there are few, I believe, at least in France, so worthy of attention as an Oak which may be seen in the 'Pays de Caux,' about a league from Yvetot, close to the church, and in the burial ground of Allonville.

The height of this Tree does not answer to its girth; the trunk, from the roots to the summit, forms a complete cone; and the inside of this cone is hollow throughout the whole of its height.

The lower part of its hollow trunk has been transformed into a Chapel of six or seven feet in diameter, carefully wainscotted and paved, and an open iron gate guards the humble Sanctuary. Leading to it there is a staircase, which twists round the body of the Tree. At certain seasons of the year divine service is performed in this Chapel.

The summit has been broken off many years, but there is a surface at the top of the trunk, of the diameter of a very large tree, and from it rises a pointed roof, covered with slates, in the form of a steeple, which is surmounted with an iron Cross, that rises in a picturesque manner from the middle of the leaves, like an ancient Hermitage above the surrounding Wood. Over the entrance to the Chapel an Inscription appears, which informs us it was erected by the Abbé du Détroit, Curate of Allonville in the year 1696; and over a door is another, dedicating it 'To Our Lady of Peace.'

Saturday Magazine, No. 14.

Page 131.

"The Seven Sisters."

The story of this poem is from the German of FREDERICA BRUN.

Page 140.

"The Waggoner."

Several years after the event that forms the subject of the Poem, in company with my friend, the late Mr. Coleridge, I happened to fall in with the person to whom the name of Benjamin is given. Upon our expressing regret that we

had not, for a long time, seen upon the road either him or his waggon, he said:—"They could not do without me: and as to the man who was put in my place, no good could come out of him; he was a man of no ideas."

The fact of my discarded hero's getting the horses out of a great difficulty with a word, as related in the poem, was told me by an eye-witness.

• Page 165.

"Song at the Feast of Brougham Castle."

Henry Lord Clifford was the son of John Lord Clifford, who was slain at Towton Field, which John Lord Clifford was the person who after the battle of Wakefield slew, in the pursuit, the young Earl of Rutland, son of the Duke of York, who had fallen in the battle, "in part of revenge" (say the Authors of the *History of Cumberland and Westmoreland*): "for the Earl's Father had slain his." A deed which worthily blamished the author (saith Speed); "but who, as he adds, "dare promise anything temperate of himself in the heat of martial fury? chiefly, when it was resolved not to leave any branch of the York line standing; for so one maketh this Lord to speak." This, no doubt, I would observe by the bye, was an action sufficiently in the vindictive spirit of the times, and yet not altogether so bad as represented; "for the Earl was no child, as some writers would have him, but able to bear arms, being sixteen or seventeen years of age, as is evident from this (say the Memoirs of the Countess of Pembroke, who was laudably anxious to wipe away, as far as could be, this stigma from the illustrious name to which she was born), that he was the next Child to King Edward the Fourth, which his mother had by Richard Duke of York, and that King was then eighteen years of age. It may further be observed, that Lord Clifford, who was then himself only twenty-five years of age, had been a leading man and commander, two or three years together in the army of Lancaster, before this time; and, therefore, would be less likely to think that the Earl of Rutland might be entitled to mercy from his youth. But, independent of this act, at best a cruel and savage one, the Family of Clifford had done enough to draw upon them the vehement hatred of the House of York: so that after the Battle of Towton there was no hope for them but in flight and concealment. Henry, the

subject of the poem, was deprived of his estate and honours during the space of twenty-four years; all which time he lived as a shepherd in Yorkshire, or in Cumberland, where the estate of his Father-in-law (Sir Lancelot Threlkeld) lay. He was restored to his estate and honours in the first year of Henry the Seventh. It is recorded that, "when called to Parliament, he behaved nobly and wisely; but otherwise came seldom to London or the Court; and rather delighted to live in the country, where he repaired several of his Castles, which had gone to decay during the late troubles." Thus far is chiefly collected from Nicholson and Burn; and I can add, from my own knowledge, that there is a tradition current in the village of Threlkeld and its neighbourhood, his principal retreat, that, in the course of his shepherd-life, he had acquired great astronomical knowledge.

Page 166.

"Earth helped him with the cry of blood."

This line is from "The Battle of Bosworth Field," by Sir John Beaumont (brother to the dramatist), whose poems are written with much spirit, elegance, and harmony.

Page 167.

"And both the undying Fish that swim Through Bowscale-tarn," etc.

It is imagined by the people of the country that there are two immortal fish, inhabitants of this tarn, which lies in the mountains not far from Threlkeld.—Blencathara, mentioned before, is the old and proper name of the mountain vulgarly called Saddleback.

Page 176.

"living hill."

— "awhile the living hill
Heaved with convulsive throes, and all
was still." DR. DARWIN.

Page 181.

"The Wishing-gate."

"In the Vale of Grasmere, by the side of the old highway leading to Ambleside, is a gate which, time out of mind, has been called the Wishing-gate."

Having been told, upon what I thought good authority, that this gate had been destroyed, and the opening, where it

hung, walled up, I gave vent immediately to my feelings in these stanzas. But going to the place some time after, I found, with much delight, my old favourite unmolested.

Page 220.

"Wild Redbreast," etc.

This sonnet, as poetry, explains itself, yet the scene of the incident having been a wild wood, it may be doubted, as a point of natural history, whether the bird was aware that his attentions were bestowed upon a human, or even a living, creature. But a redbreast will perch upon the foot of a gardener at work, and alight on the handle of the spade when his hand is half upon it—this I have seen. And under my own roof I have witnessed affecting instances of the creature's friendly visits to the chambers of sick persons, as described in the verses to the redbreast, page 117. One of these welcome intruders used frequently to roost upon a nail in the wall, from which a picture had hung, and was ready, as morning came, to pipe his song in the hearing of the invalid, who had been long confined to her room. These attachments to a particular person, when marked and continued, used to be reckoned ominous; but the superstition is passing away.

Page 229.

"At the Grave of Burns."

The following is extracted from the journal of my fellow-traveller, to which, as persons acquainted with my poems will know, I have been obliged on other occasions:—

"Dumfries, August, 1803.

"On our way to the churchyard where Burns is buried, we were accompanied by a bookseller, who showed us the outside of Burns's house, where he had lived the last three years of his life, and where he died. It has a mean appearance, and is in a bye situation; the front white-washed; dirty about the doors, as most Scotch houses are; flowering plants in the window. Went to visit his grave; he lies in a corner of the churchyard, and his second son, Francis Wallace, beside him. There is no stone to mark the spot; but a hundred guineas have been collected to be expended upon some sort of monument. 'There,' said the bookseller, pointing to a pompous monument, 'lies Mr.—(I have forgotten the name)—a remarkably clever man; he was an attorney, and scarcely ever lost a cause

he undertook. Burns made many a lampoon upon him, and there they rest as you see.' We looked at Burns's grave with melancholy and painful reflections, repeating to each other his own poet's epitaph:—

'Is there a man,' etc.

"The churchyard is full of grave-stones and expensive monuments in all sorts of fantastic shapes: obelisk-wise, pillar-wise, etc. When our guide had left us we turned again to Burns's grave, and afterwards went to his house, wishing to inquire after Mrs. Burns, who was gone to spend some time by the sea-shore with her children. We spoke to the maid-servant at the door, who invited us forward, and we sat down in the parlour. The walls were coloured with a blue wash; on one side of the fire was a mahogany desk; opposite the window a clock, which Burns mentions, if one of his letters, having received it as a present. The house was cleanly and neat in the inside, the stairs of stone scoured white, the kitchen on the right side of the passage, the parlour on the left. In the room above the parlour the poet died, and his son, very lately, in the same room. The servant told us she had lived four years with Mrs. Burns, who was now in great sorrow for the death of Wallace. She said that Mrs. B.'s youngest son was now at Christ's Hospital. We were glad to leave Dumfries, where we could think of little but poor Burns, and his moving about on that unpoetic ground."

Page 244.

"Jones! as from Calais southward."

(See dedication to Descriptive Sketches, page 8.)

This excellent person, one of my earliest and dearest friends, died in the year 1835. We were undergraduates together of the same year, at the same college; and companions in many a delightful ramble through his own romantic country of North Wales. Much of the latter part of his life he passed in comparative solitude; which I know was often cheered by remembrance of our youthful adventures, and of the beautiful regions which, at home and abroad, we had visited together. Let me only add, that during the middle part of his life he resided many years (as Incumbent of the Living) at a Parsonage in Oxfordshire, which is the subject of the 7th of the "Miscellaneous Sonnets," Part. 3.

Page 245.

"The King of Sweden."

In this and a succeeding Sonnet on the same subject, let me be understood as a Poet availing himself of the situation which the King of Sweden occupied, and of the principles avowed in his manifestos; as laying hold of these advantages for the purpose of embodying moral truths.

Page 246.

*Danger which they fear, and honour
which they understood not."*

Words in Lord Brooke's Life of
Sir P. Sidney.

Page 254.

"Zaragoza."

In this Sonnet I am under some obligations to one of an Italian author, to which I cannot refer.

Page 259.

"The Germans on the Heights of Hockheim."

The event is thus recorded in the journals of the day:—"When the Austrians took Hockheim, in one part of the engagement they got to the brow of the hill, whence they had their first view of the Rhine. They instantly halted—not a gun was fired—not a voice heard: they stood gazing on the river with those feelings which the events of the last fifteen years at once called up. Prince Schwartzburg rode up to know the cause of this sudden stop; they then gave three cheers, rushed after the enemy and drove them into the water."

Page 267.

"Fish-Women."

If in this Sonnet I should seem to have borne a little too hard upon the personal appearance of the worthy Poissards of Calais, let me take shelter under the authority of my lamented friend, the late Sir George Beaumont. He, a most accurate observer, used to say of them, that their features and countenances seemed to have conformed to those of the creatures they dealt in; at all events the resemblance was striking.

Page 267.

"Brugès."

In this city are many vestiges of the splendour of the Burgundian Dukedom, and the long black mantle universally

worn by the females is probably a remnant of the old Spanish connexion, which, if I do not much deceive myself, is traceable in the grave deportment of its inhabitants. Brugès is comparatively little disturbed by that curious contest, or rather conflict, of Flemish with French propensities in matters of taste, so conspicuous through other parts of Flanders. In Brussels, the modern taste in costume, architecture, etc., has got the mastery; in Ghent there is a struggle: but Brugès old images are still paramount, and an air of monastic life among the quiet goings-on of a thinly-peopled city is inexpressibly soothing; a pensive grace seems to be cast over all, even the very children.—*Extract from Journal.*

Page 268.

*"Where unremitting frosts the rocky
crescent bleach"*

"Let a wall of rocks be imagined from three to six hundred feet in height, and rising between France and Spain, so as physically to separate the two kingdoms—let us fancy this wall curved like a crescent, with its convexity towards France. Lastly, let us suppose, that in the very middle of the wall, a breach of 300 feet wide has been beaten down by the famous Roland, and we may have a good idea of what the mountaineers call the 'BRECHE DE ROLAND.'"—*Raymond's "Pyrenees."*

Page 269.

"Misere Domine."

See the beautiful song in Mr. Coleridge's Tragedy, "REMOSE."

Page 269.

*"Not like his great Compeers, indig-
nantly
Doth Danube spring to life!"*

Before this quarter of the Black Forest was inhabited, the source of the Danube might have suggested some of those sublime images which Armstrong has so finely described; at present, the contrast is most striking. The spring appears in a capacious stone basin in front of a ducal palace, with a pleasure-ground opposite; then, passing under the pavement, takes the form of a little, clear, bright, black, vigorous rill, barely wide enough to tempt the agility of a child five years old to leap over it,—and entering the garden, it joins, after a course of a few hundred yards, a stream much more considerable than itself.

Page 269.

"On approaching the Staub-bach."

"The Staub-bach" is a narrow stream which, after a long course on the heights, comes to the sharp edge of a somewhat overhanging precipice, overleaps it with a bound, and, after a fall of 930 feet, forms again a rivulet. The vocal powers of these musical beggars may seem to be exaggerated; but this wild and savage air was utterly unlike any sounds I had ever heard; the notes reached me from a distance, and on what occasion they were sung I could not guess, only they seemed to belong, in some way or other, to the waterfall—and reminded me of religious services chanted to streams and fountains in Pagan times.

Page 270.

"Engelberg."

The Convent whose site was pointed out, according to tradition, in this manner, is seated at its base. The architecture of the building is unimpressive, but the situation is worthy of the honour which the imagination of the mountaineers has conferred upon it.

Page 274.

*"Though searching damp and many an envious flaw
Have marred this Work."*

This picture of the Last Supper has not only been grievously injured by time, but the greatest part of it, if not the whole, is said to have been retouched, or painted over again. These niceties may be left to connoisseurs,—I speak of it as I felt.

Page 275.

"Of figures human and divine."

The statues ranged round the spire and along the roof of the Cathedral of Milan, have been found fault with by persons whose exclusive taste is unfortunate for themselves. It is true that the same expense and labour, judiciously directed to purposes more strictly architectural, might, have much heightened the general effect of the building; for, seen from the ground, the statues appear diminutive. But the *coup-d'oeil*, from the best point of view, which is half way up the spire, must strike an unprejudiced person with admiration; and surely the selection and arrangement of the figures is exquisitely fitted to support the religion of the country in the imaginations and feelings of the spectator.

Page 278.

*"Still, with those white-robed Shapes—a
living Stream,
The glacier Pillars join in solemn guise."*

This procession is a part of the sacramental service performed once a month. In the valley of Engelberg we had the good fortune to be present at the *Grand Festival* of the Virgin—but the procession on that day, though consisting of upwards of 1,000 persons, assembled from all the branches of the sequestered valley, was much less striking (notwithstanding the sublimity of the surrounding scenery): it wanted both the simplicity of the other and the accompaniment of the glacier-columns, whose sisterly resemblance to the moving figures gave it a most beautiful and solemn peculiarity.

Page 279.

*"That gave the Roman his triumphal
shells."*

Near the town of Boulogne, and overhanging the beach, are the remains of a tower which bears the name of Caligula, who here terminated his western expedition, of which these sea-shells were the boasted spoils. And at no great distance from these ruins, Buonaparte, standing upon a mound of earth, harangued his "Army of England," reminding them of the exploits of Cæsar, and pointing towards the white cliffs, upon which their standards were to float.

Page 280.

*"We mark majestic herds of cattle, free.
To ruminate."*

This is a most grateful sight for an Englishman returning to his native land. Everywhere one misses in the cultivated grounds abroad, the animated and soothing accompaniment of animals ranging and selecting their own food at will.

Page 280.

*"Far as St. Maurice, from yon eastern
Forks."*

LES FOURCHES, the point at which the two chains of mountains part, that inclose the Valais, which terminates at St. MAURICE.

Page 281.

*"Ye that occupy
Your council-seats beneath the open sky,
On Sarnen's Mount."*

SARNEN, one of the two capitals of the Canton of Underwalden; the spot here

alluded to is close to the town, and is called the Landenberg, from the tyrant of that name, whose chateau formerly stood there. On the 1st of January, 1308, the great day which the confederated heroes had chosen for the deliverance of their country, all the castles of the governors were taken by force or stratagem; and the tyrants themselves conducted, with their creatures, to the frontiers, after having witnessed the destruction of their strongholds. From that time the Landenberg has been the place where the legislators of this division of the Canton assemble.

Page 281.

"Calls me to grace her honoured Bridge."

The bridges of Lucerne are roofed, and open at the sides, so that the passenger has, at the same time, the benefit of shade, and a view of the magnificent country. The pictures are attached to the rafters; those from Scripture History on the cathedral bridge, amount, according to my notes, to 240. Subjects from the Old Testament face the passenger as he goes towards the Cathedral, and those from the New as he returns.

Page 282.

"Although 'tis fair,
'Twill be another Yarrow."

These words were quoted to me from "Yarrow Unvisited," by Sir Walter Scott, when I visited him at Abbotsford, a day or two before his departure for Italy: and the affecting condition in which he was when he looked upon Rome from the Janicular Mount, was reported to me by a lady who had the honour of conducting him thither.

Page 285.

"His sepulchral verse."

If any English reader should be desirous of knowing how far I am justified in thus describing the epitaphs of Chiabrera, he will find translated specimens of them in this volume, under the head of "Epitaphs and Elegiac Pieces."

Page 286.

"Aquapendente."

It would be ungenerous not to advert to the religious movement that, since the composition of these verses in 1837, has made itself felt, more or less strongly, throughout the English Church;—a

movement that takes, for its first principle, a devout deference to the voice of Christian antiquity. It is not my office to pass judgment on questions of theological detail; but my own repugnance to the spirit and system of Romanism has been so repeatedly and, I trust, feelingly expressed, that I shall not be suspected of a leaning that way, if I do not join in the grave charge, thrown out, perhaps in the heat of controversy, against the learned and pious men whose labours I allude. I speak apart from controversy; but, with strong faith in the moral temper which would elevate the present by doing reverence to the past, I would draw cheerful auguries for the English Church from this movement, as likely to restore among us a tone of piety more earnest and real, than that produced by the mere formalities of the understanding, refusing, in a degree, which I cannot but lament, that its own temper and judgment shall be controlled by those of antiquity.

Page 286.

"The pine of Monte Marie at Rome."

Within a couple of hours of my arrival at Rome, I saw from Monte Pincio, the pine tree as described in the sonnet; and, while expressing admiration at the beauty of its appearance, I was told by an acquaintance of my fellow-traveller, who happened to join us at the moment, that a price had been paid for it by the late Sir G. Beaumont, upon condition that the proprietor should not act upon his known intention of cutting it down.

Page 291.

"At the Convent of Camaldoli."

This famous sanctuary was the original establishment of Saint Romualdo (or Runwald, as our ancestors Saxonized the name), in the 11th century, the ground (campo) being given by a Count Maldo. The Camaldolensi, however, have spread wide as a branch of Benedictines, and may therefore be classed among the gentlemen of the monastic orders. The society comprehends two orders, monks and hermits; symbolized by their arms, two doves drinking out of the same cup. The monastery in which the monks here reside is beautifully situated, but a large unattractive edifice, not unlike a factory. The hermitage is placed in a loftier and wilder region of the forest. It comprehends between twenty and thirty distinct residences, each including for its

single hermit an inclosed piece of ground and three very small apartments. There are days of indulgence when the hermit may quit his cell, and when old age arrives, he descends from the mountain and takes his abode among the monks.

My companion had, in the year 1831, fallen in with the monk, the subject of these two sonnets, who showed him his abode among the hermits. It is from him that I received the following particulars. He was then about forty years of age, but his appearance was that of an older man. He had been a painter by profession, but on taking orders changed his name from Santi to Raffaello, perhaps with an unconscious reference as well to the great Sanzio d'Urbino as to the archangel. He assured my friend that he had been thirteen years in the hermitage and had never known melancholy or ennui. In the little recess for study and prayer there was a small collection of books. "I read only," said he, "books of asceticism and mystical theology." On being asked the names of the most famous mystics, he enumerated Scaramelli, San Giovanni della Croce, St. Dionysius the Areopagite (supposing the work which bears his name to be really his), and with peculiar emphasis *Ricardo di San Vittori*. The works of *Saint Theresa* are also in high repute among ascetics.

We heard that Raffaello was then living in the convent; my friend sought in vain to renew his acquaintance with him. The reader will perceive that these sonnets were supposed to be written when he was a young man.

Page 291.

"What aim had they the Pair of Monks?"

In justice to the Benedictines of Camaldoli, by whom strangers are so hospitably entertained, I feel obliged to notice that I saw among them no other figures at all resembling, in size and complexion, the two monks described in this sonnet. What was their office, or the motive which brought them to this place of mortification, a feeling of delicacy prevented me from inquiring.

Page 291.

"At Vallombrosa."

The name of Milton is pleasingly connected with Vallombrosa in many ways. The pride with which the monk, without any previous question from me, pointed

out his residence, I shall not readily forget. It may be proper here to defend the poet from a charge which has been brought against him, in respect to the passage in *Paradise Lost* where this place is mentioned. It is said that he has erred in speaking of the trees there being deciduous, whereas they are, in fact, pines. The fault-finders are themselves mistaken; the natural woods of the region of Vallombrosa are deciduous, and spread to a great extent; those near the convent are, indeed, mostly pines; but they are avenues of trees planted within few steps of each other, and thus composing large tracts of wood, plots of which are periodically cut down.

Page 300.

"The River Duddon."

The above series of sonnets was the growth of many years;—the one which stands the fourteenth was the first produced; and others were added upon occasional visits to the stream, or as recollections of the scenes upon its banks awakened a wish to describe them.

Page 301.

"There bloomed the strawberry of the wilderness,
The trembling eyebright showed her sapphire blue."

These two lines are in a great measure taken from "The Beauties of Spring, a Juvenile Poem," by the Rev. Joseph Sympson. He was a native of Cumberland, and was educated in the vale of Grasmere, and at Hawkshead school; his poems are little known, but they contain passages of splendid description; and the versification of his "Vision of Alfred" is harmonious and animated.

Page 304.

"A dark plume fetch me."

The eagle requires a large domain for its support: but several pairs, not many years ago, were constantly resident in this country, building their nests in the steep of Borrowdale, Wastdale, Ennerdale, and on the eastern side of Helvellyn. The bird frequently returns, but is always destroyed. Not long since, one visited Rydal Lake, and remained some hours near its banks: the consternation which it occasioned among the different species of fowls, particularly the herons, was expressed by loud screams. The horse also is naturally afraid of the eagle.—There were several Roman sta-

tions among these mountains; the most considerable seems to have been in a meadow at the head of Windermere, established, undoubtedly, as a check over the Passes of Kirkstone, Dunmail-raise, and of Hardknott, and Wrynose. On the margin of Rydal Lake, a coin of Trajan was discovered very lately.—The Roman fort here alluded to, called by the country people "*Hardknott Castle*," is most impressively situated half-way down the hill on the right of the road that descends from Hardknott into Eskdale. The Druidical Circle is about half a mile to the left of the road ascending Stone-side from the vale of Duddon; the country people call it "*Sunken Church*."

Page 304.

"*Seathwaite Chapel*."

Seathwaite Churchyard contains the following inscription:—

"In Memory of the Reverend Robert Walker, who died the 27th of June, 1802, in the 93rd year of his age, and 67th of his curacy at Seathwaite.

"Also, of Anne his wife, who died the 25th of January, in the 93rd year of her age."

In the parish-register of Seathwaite Chapel is this notice:

"Buried, June 28th, the Rev. Robert Walker. He was curate of Seathwaite sixty-six years. He was a man singular for his temperance, industry, and integrity."

This individual is the Pastor alluded to, in the eighteenth sonnet, as a worthy compeer of the country parson of Chaucer, etc. In the seventh book of "*The Excursion*," an abstract of his character is given, beginning,—

"A Priest abides before whose life such doubts

Fall to the ground."

Page 307.

"We feel that we are greater than we know."

"And feel that I am happier than I know."—MILTON.

The allusion to the Greek Poet will be obvious to the classical reader.

Page 307.

"*The White Doe of Rylstone*."

The poem of the White Doe of Rylstone is founded on a local tradition,

and on the Ballad in Percy's Collection, entitled, "*The Rising of the North*." The tradition is as follows:—"About this time," not long after the Dissolution, "a White Doe," say the aged people of the neighbourhood, "long continued to make a weekly pilgrimage from Rylstone over the fells of Bolton, and was constantly found in the Abbey Churchyard during divine service; after the close of which she returned home as regularly as the rest of the congregation."—Dr. WHITAKER's *History of the Deanery of Craven*.—Rylstone was the property and residence of the Nortons, distinguished in that ill-advised and unfortunate insurrection; which led me to connect with this tradition the principal circumstances of their fate, as recorded in the ballad.

Page 308.

"*From Bolton's old monastic tower*."

It is to be regretted that at the present day Bolton Abbey wants this ornament: but the poem, according to the imagination of the poet, is composed in Queen Elizabeth's time. "Formerly," says Dr. Whitaker, "over the transept was a tower. This is proved not only from the mention of bells at the Dissolution, when they could have had no other place, but from the pointed roof of the choir, which must have terminated westward, in some building of superior height to the ridge."

Page 308.

"*A Chapel, like a wild-bird's nest*."

"The nave of the church having been reserved at the Dissolution, for the use of the Saxon Cure, is still a parochial chapel; and, at this day, is as well kept as the neatest English cathedral."

Page 308.

"*Who sate in the shade of the Prior's Oak*!"

"At a small distance from the great gateway stood the Prior's Oak, which was felled about the year 1720, and sold for £700. According to the price of wood at that time, it could scarcely have contained less than 1,400 feet of timber."

Page 310.

"When Lady Aaliza mourned."

The detail of this tradition may be found in Dr. Whitaker's book, and in a poem of this collection, "The Force of Prayer."

Page 310.

"Pass, pass who will, yon chantry door."

"At the east end of the north aisle of Bolton Priory Church, is a chantry belonging to Bethmesly Hall, and a vault where, according to tradition, the Claphams" (who inherited this estate, by the female line, from the Mauleverers) "were interred upright." John de Clapham, of whom this ferocious act is recorded, was a man of great note in his time: "he was a vehement partisan of the house of Lancaster, in whom the spirit of his chieftains, the Cliffords, seemed to survive."

Page 311.

"Who loved the Shepherd-lord to meet."

In this volume of poems, will be found one entitled, "Song at the Feast of Brougham Castle, upon the Restoration of Lord Clifford, the Shepherd, to the Estates and Honours of his Ancestors." A note to that poem (page 682) contains an account of this personage, chiefly extracted from Burns and Nicholson's *History of Cumberland and Westmoreland*. It gives me pleasure to add these further particulars concerning him, from Dr. Whitaker, who says he "retired to the solitude of Barden, where he seems to have enlarged the tower out of a common keeper's lodge, and where he found a retreat equally favourable to taste, to instruction, and to devotion. The narrow limits of his residence show that he had learned to despise the pomp of greatness, and that a small train of servants could suffice him, who had lived to the age of thirty a servant himself. I think this nobleman resided here almost entirely when in Yorkshire, for all his charters which I have seen are dated at Barden.

"His early habits, and the want of those artificial measures of time which even shepherds now possess, had given him a turn for observing the motions of the heavenly bodies; and, having purchased such an apparatus as could

then be procured, he amused and informed himself by those pursuits, with the aid of the Canons of Bolton, some of whom are said to have been well versed in what was then known of the science.

"I suspect this nobleman to have been sometimes occupied in a more visionary pursuit, and probably in the same company.

"For, from the family evidences, I have met with two MSS. on the subject of Alchemy, which, from the character, spelling, etc., may almost certainly be referred to the reign of Henry the Seventh. If these were originally deposited with the MSS. of the Cliffords, it might have been for the use of this nobleman. If they were brought from Bolton at the Dissolution, they must have been the work of those Canons whom he almost exclusively conversed with.

"In these peaceful employments Lord Clifford spent the whole reign of Henry the Seventh, and the first years of his son. But in the year 1513, when almost sixty years old, he was appointed to a principal command over the army which fought at Flodden, and showed that the military genius of the family had neither been chilled in him by age, nor extinguished by habits of peace.

"He survived the battle of Flodden ten years, and died April 23rd, 1523, aged about seventy."

Page 313.

"Now joy for you who from the towers Of Brancepeth look in doubt and fear."

Brancepeth Castle stands near the river Were, a few miles from the city of Durham. It formerly belonged to the Nevilles, Earls of Westmoreland.

Page 315.

"Of mitred Thurston—what a Host He conquered!"

See the Historians for the account of this memorable battle, usually denominated the Battle of the Standard.

Page 316.

"In that other day of Neville's Cross?"

"In the night before the battle of Durham was stricken and begun, the 17th day of October, anno 1346, there did appear to John Fosse, then Prior of the abbey of Durham, a Vision, commanding

him to take the holy Corporax-cloth, wherewith St. Cuthbert did cover the chalice when he used to say mass, and to put the same holy relique like to a banner-cloth upon the point of a spear, and the next morning to go and repair to a place on the west side of the city of Durham, called the Red Hills, where the Meid's Bower wogt to be, and there to remain and abide till the end of the battle. To which vision, the Prior obeying, and taking the same for a revelation of God's grace and mercy by the mediation of Holy St. Cuthbert, did accordingly the next morning, with the monks of the said abbey, repair to the said Red Hills, and there most devoutly humbling and prostrating themselves in prayer for the victory in the said battle (a great multitude of the Scots running and pressing by them, with intention to have spoiled them, yet had no power to commit any violence under such holy persons, so occupied in prayer, being protected and defended by the mighty Providence of Almighty God, and by the mediation of Holy St. Cuthbert, and the presence of the holy relique). And, after many conflicts and warlike exploits there had and done between the English men and the King of Scots and his company, the said battle ended, and the victory was obtained, to the great overthrow and confusion of the Scots, their enemies." From a book entitled, *Durham Cathedral as it stood before the Dissolution of the Monastery*.

This battle was afterwards called the Battle of Neville's Cross from the following circumstance:—

"On the west side of the city of Durham, where two roads pass each other, a most notable, famous, and goodly cross of stone-work was erected and set up to the honour of God for the victory there obtained in the field of battle, and known by the name of Nevil's Cross, and built at the sole cost of the Lord Ralph Nevil, one of the most excellent and chief persons in the said battle." The Relique of St. Cuthbert afterwards became of great importance in military events. For soon after this battle, says the same author, "The Prior caused a goodly and sumptuous banner to be made" (which is then described at great length), "and in the midst of the same banner-cloth was the said holy relique and corporax cloth enclosed, etc., etc., and so sumptuously finished, and absolutely perfected, this banner was dedicated to Holy St. Cuthbert, of intent and purpose that for the future it should

be carried to any battle, as occasion should serve; and was never carried and showed at any battle but by the especial grace of God Almighty, and the mediation of Holy St. Cuthbert, it brought home victory." It appears, from the old metrical history, that the above-mentioned banner was carried by the Earl of Surrey to Flodden Field.

* Page 319.

"An edifice of warlike frame
Stands single—Norton Tower its
name."

It is so called to this day, and is thus described by Dr. Whitaker:—"Rylstone Fell yet exhibits a monument of the old warfare between the Nortons and Cliffords. On a point of very high ground, commanding an immense prospect, and protected by two deep ravines, are the remains of a square tower, expressly said by Dodsworth to have been built by Richard Norton. The walls are of strong grout-work, about four feet thick. It seems to have been three stories high. Breaches have been industriously made in all the sides, almost to the ground, to render it untenable.

"But Norton Tower was probably a sort of pleasure-house in summer, as there are, adjoining to it, several large mounds (two of them are pretty entire), of which no other account can be given than that they were butts for large companies of archers."

Page 322.

—"despoil and desolation
O'er Rylstone's fair domain have blown."

After the attainder of Richard Norton, his estates were forfeited to the crown, where they remained till the 2nd or 3rd of James; they were then granted to Francis Earl of Cumberland. From an accurate survey made at that time it appears that the mansion-house was then in decay.

Page 323.

"In the deep fork of Amerdale."

"At the extremity of the parish of Bursnal, the valley of Wharf forks off into two great branches, one of which retains the name of Wharfedale, to the source of the river; the other is usually

called Liftondale, but more anciently and properly, Amerdale. Dernbrook, which runs along an obscure valley from the NW., is derived from a Teutonic word, signifying concealment."—Dr. WHITTAKER.

Page 324.

"*When the bells of Rylstone played
Their sabbath music—"God us Ayle."*

On one of the bells of Rylstone church, which seems coeval with the building of the tower, is this cypher, "J. N." for John Norton, and the motto, "*God us Ayle.*"

Page 324.

"*The grassy rock-encircled Pound.*"

"From the Minstrelsy of the Scottish Border, it appears that such pounds for deer, sheep, etc., were far from being uncommon in the south of Scotland. On the declivity of a steep hill, the bottom and sides of which were fenced so as to be impassable, a wall was constructed nearly level with the surface on the outside, yet so high within, that without wings it was impossible to escape in the opposite direction. Care was probably taken that these enclosures should contain better feed than the neighbouring parks or forests; and whoever is acquainted with the habits of these sequestrous animals, will easily conceive, that if the leader was once tempted to descend into the snare, a herd would follow."—Dr. WHITTAKER.

Page 325.

"*Ecclesiastical Sonnets.*"

During the month of December, 1820, I accompanied a much-beloved and honoured friend in a walk through different parts of his estate, with a view to fix upon the site of a new Church which he intended to erect. It was one of the most beautiful mornings of a mild season,—our feelings were in harmony with the cherishing influences of the scene; and such being our purpose, we were naturally led to look back upon past events with wonder and gratitude, and on the future with hope. Not long afterwards, some of the sonnets which will be found towards the close of this series were produced as a private memorial of that morning's occupation.

The Catholic Question, which was agitated in Parliament about that time, kept my thoughts in the same course; and it struck me that certain points in the Ecclesiastical History of our Country might advantageously be presented to view in verse.

For the convenience of passing from one point of the subject to another without shocks of abruptness, this work has taken the shape of a series of sonnets; but the reader, it is to be hoped, will find that the pictures are often so closely connected as to have jointly the effect of passages of a poem in a form of stanza to which there is no objection but one that bears upon the poet only—its difficulty.

"Page 326.

"*Did holy Paul a while in Britain dwell?*"

Stillingsfleet adduces many arguments in support of this opinion, but they are unconvincing. The latter part of this sonnet refers to a favourite notion of Roman Catholic writers, that Joseph of Arimathea and his companions brought Christianity into Britain and built a rude church at Glastonbury.

Page 327.

"*That Hill, whose flowery platform," etc.*

This hill at St. Alban's must have been an object of great interest to the imagination of the venerable Bede, who describes it with a delicate feeling delightful to meet with in that rude age, traces of which are frequent in his works.

Page 328.

"*Nor wants the cause the panic-striking aid
Of hallelujahs.*"

Alluding to the victory gained under Genseric.—See Bede.

Page 328.

"*By men yet scarcely conscious of a care
For other monuments than those of Earth.*"

The last six lines of this Sonnet are chiefly from the prose of Daniel; and here I will state that my obligations to other prose writers are frequent,—

obligations which, even if I had not a pleasure in courting, it would have been presumptuous to shun, in treating an historical subject. I must, however, particularize Fuller, to whom I am indebted in the sonnet upon Wicliffe and in other instances. And upon the acquittal of the Seven Bishops I have done little more than versify a lively description of that event in the MS. Memoirs of the first Lord Lonsdale.

Page 328.

"Monastery of old Bangor."

"Ethelforth reached the convent of Bangor, he perceived the Monks, twelve hundred in number, offering prayers for the success of their countrymen: 'if they are praying against us,' he exclaimed, 'they are fighting against us;' and he ordered them to be first attacked: they were destroyed; and, appalled by their fate, the courage of Brocmail wavered, and he fled from the field in dismay. Thus abandoned by their leader, his army soon gave way, and Ethelforth obtained a decisive conquest. Ancient Bangor itself soon fell into his hands, and was demolished; the noble monastery was levelled to the ground; its library, which is mentioned as a large one, the collection of ages, the repository of the most precious monuments of the ancient Britons, was consumed; half-ruined walls, gates, and rubbish were all that remained of the magnificent edifice."

See Turner's valuable "History of the Anglo-Saxons."

Page 328.

"Paulinus."

The person of Paulinus is thus described by Bede, from the memory of an eyewitness:—"Longæ staturæ, paululum incurvus, nigro capillo, facie macilentâ, naso adunco, pertenui, venerabilis simul et terribilis aspectu."

Page 329.

"Man's life is like a Sparrow."

See the original of this speech in Bede.—The Conversion of Edwin, as related by him, is highly interesting.

Page 329.

"such the inditing voice
Heard near fresh streams."

The early propagators of Christianity were accustomed to preach near rivers, for the convenience of baptism,

Page 329.

"Primitive Saxon Clergy."

Having spoken of the zeal, disinterestedness, and temperance of the clergy of those times, Bede thus proceeds:—"Unde et in magna erat veneratione tempore illo religionis habitus, ita ut ubicunque clericus aliquis, aut monachus adveniret, gaudenter ab omnibus tanquam Dei famulus exciperetur. Etiam si in itinere peregrinus inveniretur, accurrerant, et flexâ cervice, vel manu signari, vel ore illius se benedici, gaudebant. Verbis quoque horum exhortatoris diligenter auditum præbebant."—Lib. iii. cap. 26.

Page 330.

"The people work like congregated bees."

See, in Turner's *History*, vol. iii. p. 528, the account of the erection of Ramsey Monastery. Penances were removable by the performance of acts of charity and benevolence.

Page 331.

—"pain narrows not his cares."

Through the whole of his life, Alfred was subject to grievous maladies.

Page 331.

"Woe to the Crown that doth the Cowl obey!"

The violent measures carried on under the influence of Dunstan, for strengthening the Benedictine Order, were a leading cause of the second series of Danish invasions.—See Turner.

Page 334.

"Here Man more purely lives," etc.

"Bonum est nos hic esse, quia homo vivit purius, cadit rarius, surgit velocius, incedit cautius, quiescit securius, moritur felicius, purgatur citius, promiatur copiosius." Bernard. "This sentence," says Dr. Whitaker, "is usually inscribed in some conspicuous part of the Cistercian houses."

Page 337.

"Whom Obloquy pursues with hideous bark."

The list of foul names bestowed upon those poor creatures is long and curious;—and, as is, alas! too natural, most of the opprobrious appellations are drawn from circumstances into which they were forced by their persecutors.

Page 340.

"One (like those prophets whom God sent of old)
Transfigured," etc.

"M. Latimer suffered his keeper very quietly to pull off his hose, and his other array, which to looke unto was very simple: and being stripped into his shroud, he seemed as comely a person to them that were present, as one should lightly see: and whereas in his clothes hee appeared a withered and crooked sillie (weak) olde man, he now stood bolt upright, as comely a father as one might lightly behold. * * * * Then they brought a faggotte kindled with fire, and laid the same downe at doctor Ridley's feete. To whome M. Latimer spake in this manner, 'Bee of good comfort, master Ridley, and play the man: wee shall this day light such a candle by God's grace in England, as I trust shall never bee put out.'—Fox's *Acts*."

Page 342.

"The gift exalting, and with playful smile."

"On foot they went, and took Salisbury in their way, purposely to see the good Bishop, who made Mr. Hooker sit at his own table; which Mr. Hooker boasted of with much joy and gratitude when he saw his mother and friends; and at the Bishop's parting with him, the Bishop gave him good counsel and his benediction, but forgot to give him money; which, when the Bishop had considered, he sent a servant in all haste to call Richard back to him, and at Richard's return, the Bishop said to him 'Richard, I sent for you back to lend you a horse which hath carried me many a mile, and I thank God with much ease, and presently delivered into his hand a walking-staff, with which he professed he had travelled through many parts of Germany; and he said, 'Richard, I do

not give, but lend you my horse; be sure you be honest, and bring my horse back to me, at your return this way to Oxford. And I do now give you ten groats to bear your charges to Exeter; and here is ten groats more, which I charge you to deliver to your mother, and tell her I send a Bishop's benediction with it, and beg the continuance of her prayers for me. And if you bring my horse back to me, I will give you ten groats more to carry you on foot to the college; and so God bless you, good Richard.'—See Walton's *Life of Richard Hooker*."

Page 343.

"Laud."

In this age a word cannot be said in praise of Laud, or even in compassion for his fate, without incurring a charge of bigotry; but fearless of such imputation, I concur with Hume, "that it is sufficient for his vindication to observe that his errors were the most excusable of all those which prevailed during that zealous period." A key to the right understanding of those parts of his conduct that brought the most odium upon him in his own time, may be found in the following passage of his speech before the bar of the House of Peers:—"Ever since I came in place, I have laboured nothing more than that the external publick worship of God, so much slighted in divers parts of this kingdom, might be preserved, and that with as much decency and uniformity as might be." For I evidently saw that the public neglect of God's service in the outward face of it, and the nasty lying of many places dedicated to that service, had almost cast a damp upon the true and inward worship of God, which, while we live in the body, needs external helps, and all little enough to keep it in any vigour."

Page 346.

"The Pilgrim Fathers."

American episcopacy, in union with the church in England, strictly belongs to the general subject. Bishop White was consecrated at Lambeth, Feb. 4, 1787, by Archbishop Moore; and before his long life was closed, twenty-six bishops had been consecrated in America, by himself. For his character and opinions, see his own numerous Works, and a Sermon in commemoration of him, by George Washington Doane, Bishop of New Jersey.

Page 350.

"Rural Ceremony"

This is still continued in many churches in Westmoreland. It takes place in the month of July, when the floor of the stalls is strewn with fresh rushes; and hence it is called the "Rush-bearing."

Page 350.

"Teaching us to forget them or forgive."

This is borrowed from an affecting passage in Mr. George Dyer's *History of Cambridge*.

Page 351.

"had we, like them, endured
Sore stress of apprehension."

See Burnet, who is unusually animated on this subject; "the east wind, so anxiously expected and prayed for, was called "the Protestant wind."

Page 351.

"Yet will we not conceal the precious
Cross,
Like men ashamed."

The Lutherans have retained the Cross within their churches.

Page 357.

"Highland Hut."

This sonnet describes the exterior of a Highland hut, as often seen under morning or evening sunshine. To the authoress of the "Address to the Wind," and other poems, who was my fellow-traveller in this tour, I am indebted for the following extract from her journal.

"On our return from the Trossachs the evening began to darken, and it rained so heavily that we were completely wet before we had come two miles, and it was dark when we landed with our boatman, at his hut upon the banks of Loch Katfine. I was faint from cold; the good woman had provided, according to her promise, a better fire than we had found in the morning; and, indeed, when I sat down in the chimney-corner of her smoky biggin, I thought I had never felt more comfortable in my life: a pan of coffee was boiling for us, and, having put our clothes in the way of

drying, we all sat down thankful for a shelter. We could not prevail upon our boatman, the master of the house, to draw near the fire, though he was cold and wet, or to suffer his wife to get him dry clothes till she had served us, which she did most willingly.

Page 359.

"Hart's-horn Tree."

"In the time of the first Robert de Clifford, in the year 1333 or 1334, Edward Baliol king of Scotland came into Westmoreland, and stayed some time with the said Robert at his castles of Appleby, Brougham and Pendragon. And during that time they ran a stag by a single greyhound out of Whinell Park to Redkirk, in Scotland, and back again to this place; where, being both spent, the stag leaped over the pales, but died on the other side; and the greyhound, attempting to leap, fell, and died on the contrary side. In memory of this fact the stag's horns were nailed upon a tree just by, and (the dog being named Hercules) this rhythm was made upon them:

'Hercules kill'd Hart a greese,
And Hart a greese kill'd Hercules.'

The tree to this day bears the name of Hart's-horn Tree."—Nicholson and Burns' *History of Westmoreland and Cumberland*.

The tree has now disappeared, but I well remember its imposing appearance as it stood, in a decayed state, by the side of the high road leading from Penrith to Appleby.

Page 368.

"But if thou, (like Cocytus from the moans
Heard on his rueful margin)," etc.

Dr. Whitaker has derived the name of Greta from the word of common occurrence in the north of England, "to greet;" signifying to lament aloud, mostly with weeping; a conjecture rendered more probable from the stony and rocky channel of both the Cumberland and Yorkshire rivers.

The channel of the Greta, immediately above Keswick, has, for the purposes of building, been in a great measure cleared of the immense stones which, by their

concussion in high floods, produced the loud and awful noises described in the sonnet,

Page 369.

"By hooded Volarësses," etc.

Attached to the church of Brigham was formerly a chantry, which held a moiety of the manor; and in the decayed parsonage some vestiges of monastic architecture are still to be seen.

Page 370.

"Mary Queen of Scots landing at Workington."

"The fears and impatience of Mary were so great," says Robertson, "that she got into a fisher-boat, and with about twenty attendants landed at Workington, in Cumberland; and thence she was conducted with many marks of respect to Carlisle."

Page 370.

"St. Bees' Heads."

St. Bees' Heads, anciently called the Cliff of Baruth, are a conspicuous sea-mark for all vessels sailing in the NE. parts of the Irish Sea. In a bay, one side of which is formed by the southern headland, stands the village of St. Bees: a place distinguished, from very early times, for its religious and scholastic foundations.

"St. Bees," says Nicholson and Burns, "had its name from Bega, an holy woman from Ireland who is said to have founded here, about the year of our Lord 650, a small monastery, where afterwards a church was built in memory of her."

"The aforesaid religious house, being destroyed by the Danes, was restored by William de Meschiens, son of Ranulph, and brother of Ranulph de Meschiens, first Earl of Cumberland after the Conquest; and made a cell of a prior and six Benedictine monks to the Abbey of St. Mary at York."

Several traditions of miracles, connected with the foundation of the first of these religious houses, survive among the people of the neighbourhood; one of which is alluded to in these stanzas.

After the dissolution of the monasteries, Archbishop Grindal founded a free school at St. Bees, from which the counties of Cumberland and Westmore-

land have derived great benefit; and recently, under the patronage of the Earl of Lonsdale, a college has been established there for the education of ministers for the English Church.

The form of stanza in this poem, and something in the style of versification, are adopted from the "St. Monica," a poem of much beauty upon a monastic subject, by Charlotte Smith: a lady to whom English verse is under greater obligations than are likely to be either acknowledged or remembered. She wrote little, and that little unambitiously but with true feeling for rural nature, at a time when nature was not much regarded by English Poets; for in point of time her earlier writings preceded, I believe, those of Cowper and Burns.

Page 373.

"And they are led by noble Hillary."

THE TOWER OF REFUGE, an ornament to Douglas Bay, was erected chiefly through the humanity and zeal of Sir William Hillary; and he also was the founder of the lifeboat establishment, at that place; by which, under his superintendence and often by his exertions at the imminent hazard of his own life, many seamen and passengers have been saved.

Page 374.

"By a retired Mariner."

This unpretending sonnet is by a gentleman nearly connected with me, and I hope, as it falls so easily into its place, that both the writer and the reader will excuse its appearance here.

Page 375.

"On revisiting Dunolly Castle."

This ingenious piece of workmanship, as I afterwards learned, had been executed for their own amusement by some labourers employed about the place.

Page 376.

"Cave of Staffa."

The reader may be tempted to exclaim, "How came this and the two following sonnets to be written, after the dissatisfaction expressed in the preceding one?" In fact, at the risk of incurring the

reasonable displeasure of the master of the steam-boat, I returned to the cave, and explored it under circumstances more favourable to those imaginative impressions which it is so wonderfully fitted to make upon the mind.

Page 379.

"*Hope smiled when your nativity was cast,
Children of Summer!*"

Upon the head of the columns which form the front of the cave rests a body of decomposed basaltic matter, which was richly decorated with that large bright flower, the ox-eyed daisy.

Page 377.

"*Iona!*"

The four last lines of this sonnet are adopted from a well-known sonnet of Russel, as conveying my feeling better than any words of my own could do.

Page 378.

"*Yet felched from Paradise.*"

It is to be feared that there is more of the poet than the sound etymologist in this derivation of the name Eden. On the western coast of Cumberland is a rivulet which enters the sea at Moresby, known also in the neighbourhood by the name of Eden. May not the latter syllable come from the word Dean, a valley? Langdale, near Ambleside, is by the inhabitants called Langden. The former syllable occurs in the name Emont, a principal feeder of the Eden; and the stream which flows, when the tide is out, over Cartmel Sands, is called the Ea—eau, French—aqua, Latin.

Page 379.

"*Canal, and Viaduct, and Railway, tell!*"

At Corby, a few miles below Nunnery, the Eden is crossed by a magnificent viaduct; and another of these works is thrown over a deep glen or ravine at a very short distance from the main stream.

Page 379.

"*A weight of awe, not easy to be borne.*"

The daughters of Long Meg, placed in a perfect circle eighty yards in diameter,

are seventy-two in number above ground; a little way out of the circle stands Long Meg herself, a single stone, eighteen feet high. When I first saw this monument, as I came upon it by surprise, I might over-rate its importance as an object; but, though it will not bear a comparison with Stonehenge, I must say I have not seen any other relique of those dark ages, which can pretend to rival it in singularity and dignity of appearance.

Page 380.

"*To the Earl of Lonsdale.*"

This sonnet was written immediately after certain trials, which took place at the Cumberland Assizes, when the Earl of Lonsdale, in consequence of repeated and long-continued attacks upon his character, through the local press, had thought it right to prosecute the conductors and proprietors of three several journals. A verdict of libel was given in one case; and, in the others, the prosecutions were withdrawn, upon the individuals retracting and disavowing the charges, expressing regret that they had been made, and promising to abstain from the like in future.

Page 407.

Last line of Sonnet. "Blest Statesman be." cf. Spenser's line:—

"*All change is perilous, and all change unsound.*"

Page 408.

"*Men of the Western World!*"

These lines were written several years ago, when reports prevailed of cruelties committed in many parts of America, by men making a law of their own passions.

Page 422.

"*The Horn of Egremont Castle.*"

This story is a Cumberland tradition. I have heard it also related of the Hall of Hutton John, an ancient residence of the Hudlestons' in a sequestered valley upon the river Dacor.

Page 428.

"The Russian Fugitive."

Peter Henry Bruce, having given in his entertaining Memoirs the substance of this Tale, affirms that, besides the concurring reports of others, he had the story from the lady's own mouth. The Lady Catherine, mentioned towards the close, is the famous Catharine, then bearing that name as the acknowledged wife of Peter the Great.

Page 458.

"Elegiac Verses."

The plant alluded to is the Moss Campion (*Silene acaulis*). This most beautiful plant is scarce in England, though it is found in great abundance upon the mountains of Scotland. The first specimen I ever saw of it, in its native bed, was singularly fine, the tuft or cushion being at least eight inches in diameter, and the root proportionably thick. I have only met with it in two places among our mountains, in both of which I have since sought for it in vain.

Page 462.

Walter Scott . died 21st Sept., 1832.
S. T. Coleridge . . . 25th July, 1834.
Charles Lamb . . . 27th Dec., 1834.
George Crabbe . . . 3rd Feb., 1832.
Felicia Hemans . . . 16th May, 1835.

Page 603.

*"'Tis, by comparison, an easy task
Earth to despise," etc.*

See, upon this subject, Baxter's most interesting review of his own opinions

and sentiments in the decline of life. It may be found (fately reprinted) in Dr. Wordsworth's *Ecclesiastical Biography*.

Page 604.

*"Alas! the endowment of immortal
Power,
'Is matched unequally with custom,
'time," etc*

"This subject is treated at length in the Ode, "Intimations of Immortality," page 463.

Page 605.

"Knowing the heart of Man is set," etc.

The passage quoted from Daniel is taken from a poem addressed to Margaret, Countess of Cumberland, of which the two last lines are by him translated from Seneca. The whole Poem is very beautiful.

Page 658.

"Perish the roses and the flowers of kings."

The "Transit gloria mundi" is finely expressed in the Introduction to the Foundation-charters of some of the ancient Abbeys. Some expressions here used are taken from that of the Abbey of St. Mary's, Furness, the translation of which is as follows:—

"Considering every day the uncertainty of life, that the roses and flowers of Kings, Emperors, and Dukes, and the crowns and palms of all the great, wither and decay; and that all things, with an uninterrupted course, tend to dissolution and death.

APPENDIX, PREFACES,

ETC. & ETC.

MUCH the greatest part of the foregoing poems has been so long before the public that no preface, explanatory of any portion of them, or of the arrangement which has been adopted, appears to be required; and had it not been for the observations contained in these prefaces upon the principles of poetry in general they would not have been reprinted even as an appendix in this edition.

PREFACE

TO THE SECOND EDITION OF SEVERAL OF THE FOREGOING POEMS, PUBLISHED, WITH AN ADDITIONAL VOLUME, UNDER THE TITLE OF "LYRICAL BALLADS."

[*Note.*—In succeeding editions, when the collection was much enlarged and diversified, this preface was transferred to the end of the volume as having little of a special application to their contents.]

THE first volume of these poems has already been submitted to general perusal. It was published, as an experiment, which, I hoped, might be of some use to ascertain, how far, by fitting to metrical arrangement a selection of the real language of men in a state of vivid sensation, that sort of pleasure and that quantity of pleasure may be imparted, which a poet may rationally endeavour to impart.

I had formed no very inaccurate estimate of the probable effect of those poems: I flattered myself that they who should be pleased with them would read them with more than common pleasure: and, on the other hand, I was well aware that, by those who should dislike them, they would be read with more than common dislike. The result has differed from my expectation in this only, that a greater number have been pleased than I ventured to hope I should please.

Several of my friends are anxious for the success of these poems, from a belief, that, if the views with which they were composed were indeed realized, a class of poetry would be produced, well adapted to interest mankind permanently, and not unimportant in the quality, and in the multiplicity of its moral relations: and on this account they have advised me to prefix a systematic defence of the theory upon which the poems were written. But I was unwilling to undertake the task, knowing that on this occasion the reader would look coldly

upon my arguments, since I might be suspected of having been principally influenced by the selfish and foolish hope of reasoning him into an approbation of these particular poems: and I was still more unwilling to undertake the task, because, adequately to display the opinions, and fully to enforce the arguments, would require a space wholly disproportionate to a preface. For, to treat the subject with the clearness and coherence of which it is susceptible, it would be necessary to give a full account of the present state of the public taste in this country, and to determine how far this taste is healthy or depraved; which, again, could not be determined, without pointing out in what manner language and the human mind act and react on each other, and without retracing the revolutions, not of literature alone, but likewise of society itself. I have therefore altogether declined to enter regularly upon this defence; yet I am sensible that there would be something like impropriety in abruptly obtruding upon the public, without a few words of introduction, poems so materially different from those upon which general approbation is at present bestowed.

It is supposed, that by the act of writing in verse an author makes a formal engagement that he will gratify certain known habits of association; that he not only thus apprises the reader that certain classes of ideas and expressions will be found in his book, but that others will be carefully excluded. This ex-

ponent or symbol held forth by metrical language must in different eras of literature have excited very different expectations : for example, in the age of Catullus, Terence, and Lucretius, and that of Statius or Claudian ; and in our own country in the age of Shakespeare and Beaumont and Fletcher, and that of Donne and Cowley, or Dryden, or Pope. I will not take upon me to determine the exact import of the promise which, by the act of writing in verse, an author, in the present day, makes to his reader ; but it will undoubtedly appear to many persons that I have not fulfilled the terms of an engagement thus voluntarily contracted. They who have been accustomed to the gaudiness and inane phraseology of many modern writers, if they persist in reading this book to its conclusion, will, no doubt, frequently have to struggle with feelings of strangeness and awkwardness : they will look round for poetry, and will be induced to inquire by what species of courtesy these attempts can be permitted to assume that title. I hope therefore the reader will not censure me for attempting to state what I have proposed to myself to perform ; and also (as far as the limits of a preface will permit) to explain some of the chief reasons which have determined me in the choice of my purpose : that at least he may be spared any unpleasant feeling of disappointment, and that I myself may be protected from one of the most dishonourable accusations which can be brought against an author ; namely, that of an indolence which prevents him from endeavouring to ascertain what is his duty, or, when his duty is ascertained, prevents him from performing it.

The principal object, then, proposed in these poems was to choose incidents and situations from common life, and to relate or describe them, throughout, as far as was possible in a selection of language really used by men, and, at the same time, to throw over them a certain colouring of imagination, whereby ordinary things should be presented to the mind in an unusual aspect ; and, further, and above all, to make these incidents and situations interesting by tracing in them, truly though not ostentatiously, the primary laws of our nature : chiefly, as far as regards the manner in which we associate ideas in a state of excitement. Humble and rustic life was generally chosen, because, in that condition, the essential passions of the heart find a better soil in which they can attain their maturity, are less under restraint, and speak a plainer

and more emphatic language ; because in that condition of life our elementary feelings co-exist in a state of greater simplicity, and, consequently, may be more accurately contemplated, and more forcibly communicated ; because the manners of rural life germinate from those elementary feelings, and, from the necessary character of rural occupations, are more easily comprehended, and are more durable ; and, lastly, because in that condition the passions of men are incorporated with the beautiful and permanent forms of nature. The language, too, of these men has been adopted (purified indeed from what appear to be its real defects, from all lasting and rational causes of dislike or disgust) because such men hourly communicate with the best objects from which the best part of language is originally derived ; and because from their rank in society and the sameness and narrow circle of their intercourse, being less under the influence of social vanity, they convey their feelings and notions in simple and unelaborated expressions. Accordingly, such a language, arising out of repeated experience and regular feelings, is a more permanent, and a far more philosophical language, than that which is frequently substituted for it by poets, who think that they are conferring honour upon themselves and their art, in proportion as they separate themselves from the sympathies of men and indulge in arbitrary and capricious habits of expression, in order to furnish food for fickle tastes, and fickle appetites, of their own creation.¹

I cannot, however, be sensible to the present outcry against the triviality and meanness, both of thought and language, which some of my contemporaries have occasionally introduced into their metrical compositions ; and I acknowledge that this defect, where it exists, is more dishonourable to the writer's own character than false refinement or arbitrary innovation, though I should contend at the same time that it is far less pernicious in the sum of its consequences. From such verses the poems in these volumes will be found distinguished at least by one mark of difference, that each of them has a worthy purpose. Not that I always began to write with a distinct purpose formally conceived ; but habits of

¹ It is worth while here to observe, that the affecting parts of Chaucer are almost always expressed in language pure and universally intelligible even to this day.

meditation have, I trust, so prompted and regulated my feelings, that my descriptions of such objects as strongly excite those feelings, will be found to carry along with them a purpose. If this opinion be erroneous, I can have little right to the name of a poet. For all good poetry is the spontaneous overflow of powerful feelings: and though this be true, poems to which any value can be attached were never produced on any variety of subjects but by a man who, being possessed of more than usual organic sensibility, had also thought long and deeply. For our continued influxes of feelings are modified and directed by our thoughts, which are indeed the representatives of all our past feelings; and, as by contemplating the relation of these general representatives to each other, we discover what is really important to men, so, by the repetition and continuance of this act, our feelings will be connected with important subjects, till at length, if we be originally possessed of much sensibility, such habits of mind will be produced, that, by obeying blindly and mechanically the impulses of those habits, we shall describe objects, and utter sentiments, of such a nature, and in such connexion with each other, that our understanding of the reader must necessarily be in some degree enlightened, and his affections strengthened and purified.

It has been said that each of these poems has a purpose. Another circumstance must be mentioned which distinguishes these poems from the popular poetry of the day; it is this, that the feeling therein developed gives importance to the action and situation, and not the action and situation to the feeling.

A sense of false modesty shall not prevent me from asserting, that the reader's attention is pointed to this mark of distinction, far less for the sake of these particular poems, than from the general importance of the subject. The subject is indeed important! For the human mind is capable of being excited without the application of gross and violent stimulants; and he must have a very faint perception of its beauty and dignity who does not know this, and who does not further know, that one being is elevated above another, in proportion as he possesses this capability. It has therefore appeared to me, that to endeavour to produce or enlarge this capability is one of the best services in which, at any period, a writer can be engaged; but this service, excellent at all times, is especially so at the pre-

sent day. For a multitude of causes, unknown to former times, are now acting with a combined force to blunt the discriminating power of the mind, and, unfitting it for all voluntary exertion, to reduce it to a state of almost savage torpor. The most effective of these causes are the great national events which are daily taking place, and the increasing accumulation of men in cities, where the uniformity of their occupations produces a craving for extraordinary incident, which the rapid communication of intelligence hourly gratifies. To this tendency of life and manners the literature and theatrical exhibitions of the country have conformed themselves. The invaluable works of our elder writers, I had almost said the works of Shakespeare and Milton, are driven into neglect by frantic novels, sickly and stupid German tragedies, and deluges of idle and extravagant stories in verse.—When I think upon this degrading thirst after outrageous stimulation, I am almost ashamed to have spoken of the feeble endeavour made in these volumes to counteract it; and, reflecting upon the magnitude of the general evil, I should be oppressed with no dishonourable melancholy, had I not a deep impression of certain inherent and indestructible qualities of the human mind, and likewise of certain powers in the great and permanent objects that act upon it, which are equally inherent and indestructible; and were there not added to this impression a belief, that the time is approaching when the evil will be systematically opposed, by men of greater powers, and with far more distinguished success.

Having dwelt thus long on the subjects and aim of these poems, I shall request the reader's permission to apprise him of a few circumstances relating to their style, in order, among other reasons, that he may not censure me for not having performed what I never attempted. The reader will find that personifications of abstract ideas rarely occur in these volumes; and are utterly rejected, as an ordinary device to elevate the style, and raise it above prose. My purpose was to imitate, and, as far as is possible, to adopt the very language of men; and assuredly such personifications do not make any natural or regular part of that language. They are, indeed, a figure of speech occasionally prompted by passion, and I have made use of them as such; but have endeavoured utterly to reject them as a mechanical device of style, or as a family language which writers in metre

seem to lay claim to by prescription. I have wished to keep the reader in the company of flesh and blood, persuaded that by so doing I shall interest him. Others who pursue a different track will interest him likewise; I do not interfere with their claims, but wish to prefer a claim of my own. There will also be found in these volumes little of what is usually called poetic diction; as much pains has been taken to avoid it as is ordinarily taken to produce it; this has been done for the reason already alleged, to bring my language near to the language of men; and further, because the pleasure which I have proposed to myself to impart, is of a kind very different from that which is supposed by many persons to be the proper object of poetry. Without being culpably particular, I do not know how to give my reader a more exact notion of the style in which it was my wish and intention to write, than by informing him that I have at all times endeavoured to look steadily at my subject; consequently, there is, I hope, in these poems little falsehood of description, and my ideas are expressed in language fitted to their respective importance. Something must have been gained by this practice, as it is friendly to one property of all good poetry, namely, good sense: but it has necessarily cut me off from a large portion of phrases and figures of speech which from father to son have long been regarded as the common inheritance of poets. I have also thought it expedient to restrict myself still further, having abstained from the use of many expressions, in themselves proper and beautiful, but which have been foolishly repeated by bad poets, till such feelings of disgust are connected with them as it is scarcely possible by any art of association to overpower.

If in a poem there should be found a series of lines, or even a single line, in which the language, though naturally arranged, and according to the strict laws of metre, does not differ from that of prose, there is a numerous class of critics, who, when they stumble upon these prosaisms, as they call them, imagine that they have made a notable discovery, and exult over the poet as over a man ignorant of his own profession. Now these men would establish a canon of criticism which the reader will conclude he must utterly reject, if he wishes to be pleased with these volumes. And it would be a most easy task to prove to him, that not only the language of a large portion of every good poem, even

of the most elevated character, must necessarily, except with reference to the metre, in no respect differ from that of good prose, but likewise that some of the most interesting parts of the best poems will be found to be strictly the language of prose when prose is well written. The truth of this assertion might be demonstrated by innumerable passages from almost all the poetical writings, even of Milton himself. To illustrate the subject in a general manner, I will here adduce a short composition of Gray, who was at the head of those who, by their reasonings, have attempted to widen the space of separation betwixt prose and metrical composition, and was more than any other man curiously elaborate in the structure of his own poetic diction.

"In vain to me the smiling mornings
shine,
And reddening Phœbus lifts his golden
fire:
The birds in vain their amorous descant
join,
Or cheerful fields resume their green
attire.
These ears, alas! for other notes repine;
*A different object do these eyes require,
My lonely anguish melts no heart but
mine;
And in my breast the imperfect joys
expire;*
Yet morning smiles the busy race to
cheer,
And new-born pleasure brings to happier
men;
The fields to all their wonted tribute
bear;
To warm their little loves the birds
complain.
*I fruitless mourn to him that cannot hear,
And weep the more because I weep in
vain.*"

It will easily be perceived that the only part of this sonnet which is of any value is the lines printed in italics; it is equally obvious that, except in the rhyme, and in the use of the single word "fruitless" for fruitlessly, which is so far a defect, the language of these lines does in no respect differ from that of prose.

By the foregoing quotation it has been shown that the language of prose may yet be well adapted to poetry; and it was previously asserted, that a large portion of the language of every good poem can in no respect differ from that of good prose. We will go further. It may be safely affirmed that there neither is, nor can be, any essential difference between the language of prose and metrical com-

position. We are fond of tracing the resemblance between poetry and painting, and, accordingly, we call them sisters: but where shall we find bonds of connexion sufficiently strict to typify the affinity betwixt metrical and prose composition? They both speak by and, to the same organs; the bodies, in which both of them are clothed may be said to be of the same substance, their affections are kindred, and almost identical, not necessarily differing even in degree, poetry sheds no tears "such as Angels weep," but natural and human tears; she can boast of no celestial ichor that distinguishes her vital juices from those of prose; the same human blood circulates through the veins of them both.

If it be affirmed that rhyme and metrical arrangement of themselves constitute a distinction which overturns what has just been said in the strict affinity of metrical language with that of prose, and paves the way for other artificial distinctions which the mind voluntarily admits, I answer that the language of such poetry as is here recommended is, as far as is possible, a selection of the language really spoken by men; that this selection, wherever it is made with true taste and feeling, will of itself form a distinction far greater than would at first be imagined, and will entirely separate the composition from the vulgarity and meanness of ordinary life; and, if metre be super-added thereto, I believe that a dissimilitude will be produced altogether sufficient for the gratification of a rational mind. What other distinction would we have? Whence is it to come? And where is it to exist? Not, surely, where the poet speaks through the mouths of his characters: it cannot be necessary here, either for elevation of style, or any of its supposed ornaments: for, if the poet's subject be judiciously

chosen, it will naturally, and upon fit occasion, lead him to passions the language of which, if selected truly and judiciously, must necessarily be dignified and variegated, and alive with metaphors and figures. I forbear to speak of an incongruity which would shock the intelligent reader, should the poet interweave any foreign splendour of his own with that which the passion naturally suggests; it is sufficient to say that such addition is unnecessary. And, surely, it is more probable that those passages, which with propriety abound with metaphors and figures, will have their due effect, if, upon other occasions where the passions are of a milder character, the style also be subdued and temperate.

But, as the pleasure which I hope to give by the poems now presented to the reader must depend entirely on just notions upon this subject, and, as it is in itself of high importance to our taste and moral feelings, I cannot content myself with these detached remarks. And if, in what I am about to say, it shall appear to some that my labour is unnecessary, and that I am like a man fighting a battle without enemies, such persons may be reminded, that, whatever be the language outwardly holden by men, a practical faith in the opinions which I am wishing to establish is almost unknown. If my conclusions are admitted, and carried as far as they must be carried if admitted at all, our judgments concerning the works of the greatest poets both ancient and modern will be far different from what they are at present, both when we praise, and when we censure: and our moral feelings influencing and influenced by these judgments will, I believe, be corrected and purified.

Taking up the subject, then, upon general grounds, let me ask, what is meant by the word poet? What is a poet? To whom does he address himself? And what language is to be expected from him?—He is a man speaking to men: a man, it is true, endowed with more lively sensibility, more enthusiasm, and tenderness, who has a greater knowledge of human nature, and a more comprehensive soul, than are supposed to be common among mankind; a man pleased with his own passions and volitions, and who rejoices more than other men in the spirit of life that is in him; delighting to contemplate similar volitions and passions as manifested in the goings-on of the Universe, and habitually impelled to create them where he does not find them.

¹ I here use the word "poetry" (though against my own judgment) as opposed to the word prose, and synonymous with metrical composition. But much confusion has been introduced into criticism by this contradistinction of poetry and prose, instead of the more philosophical one of poetry and matter of fact, or science. The only strict antithesis to Prose is Metre; nor is this, in truth, a strict antithesis, because lines and passages of metre so naturally occur in writing prose, that it would be scarcely possible to avoid them, even were it desirable.

To these qualities he has added a disposition to be affected more than other men by absent things as if they were present; an ability of conjuring up in himself passions, which are indeed far from being the same as those produced by real events, yet (especially in those parts of the general sympathy which are pleasing and delightful) do more nearly resemble the passions produced by real events, than any thing which, from the motions of their own minds merely, other men are accustomed to feel in themselves:—whence, and from practice, he has acquired a greater readiness and power in expressing what he thinks and feels, and especially those thoughts and feelings which, by his own choice, or from the structure of his own mind, arise in him without immediate external excitement.

But whatever portion of this faculty we may suppose even the greatest poet to possess, there cannot be a doubt that the language which it will suggest to him must often, in liveliness and truth, fall short of that which is uttered by men in real life, under the actual pressure of those passions, certain shadows of which the poet thus produces, or feels to be produced, in himself.

However exalted a notion we would wish to cherish of the character of a poet, it is obvious, that while he describes and imitates passions, his employment is in some degree mechanical, compared with the freedom and power of real and substantial action and suffering. So that it will be the wish of the poet to bring his feelings near to those of the persons whose feelings he describes, nay, for short spaces of time, perhaps, to let himself slip into an entire delusion, and even confound and identify his own feelings with theirs; modifying only the language which is thus suggested to him by a consideration that he describes for a particular purpose, that of giving pleasure. Here, then, he will apply the principle of selection which has been already insisted upon. He will depend upon this for removing what would otherwise be *painful or disgusting in the passion*; he will feel that there is no necessity to trick out or to elevate nature: and, the more industriously he applies this principle, the deeper will be his faith that no words, which his fancy or imagination can suggest, will be to be compared with those which are the emanations of reality and truth.

But it may be said by those who do not object to the general spirit of these remarks, that, as it is impossible for the

poet to produce upon all occasions language as exquisitely fitted for the passion as that which the real passion itself suggests, it is proper that he should consider himself as in the situation of a translator, who does not scruple to substitute excellencies of another kind for those which are unattainable by him; and endeavours occasionally to surpass his original, in order to make some amends for the general inferiority to which he feels that he must submit. But this would be to encourage idleness and unmanly despair. Further, it is the language of men who speak of what they do not understand; who talk of poetry as of a matter of amusement and idle pleasure; who will converse with us as gravely about a *taste* for poetry, as they express it, as if it were a thing as indifferent as a taste for rope-dancing, or Frontoiac or sherry. Aristotle, I have been told, has said, that poetry is the most philosophic of all writing: it is so: its object is truth, not individual and local, but general and operative; not staying upon external testimony, but carried alive into the heart by passion; truth which is its own testimony, which gives competence and confidence to the tribunal to which it appeals, and receives them from the same tribunal. Poetry is the image of man and nature. The obstacles which stand in the way of the fidelity of the biographer and historian, and of their consequent utility, are incalculably greater than those which are to be encountered by the poet who comprehends the dignity of his art. The poet writes under one restriction only, namely, the necessity of giving immediate pleasure to a human being possessed of that information which may be expected from him, not as a lawyer, a physician, a mariner, an astronomer or a natural philosopher, but as a man. Except this one restriction, there is no object standing between the poet and the image of things; between this, and the biographer and historian, there are a thousand.

Nor let this necessity of producing immediate pleasure be considered as a degradation of the poet's art. It is far otherwise. It is an acknowledgment of the beauty of the universe, an acknowledgment the more sincere, because not formal, but indirect; it is a task light and easy to him who looks at the world in the spirit of love; further, it is a homage paid to the native and naked dignity of man, to the grand elementary principle of pleasure, by which he knows, and feels, and lives, and moves. We have no sympathy but

what is propagated by pleasure : I would not be misunderstood ; but, whatever we sympathize with pain, it will be found that the sympathy is produced and carried on by subtle combinations with pleasure. We have no knowledge, that is, no general principles drawn from the contemplation of particular facts, but what has been built up by pleasure, and exists in us by pleasure alone. The man of science, the chemist and mathematician, whatever difficulties and disgusts they may have had to struggle with, know and feel this. However painful may be the objects with which the anatomist's knowledge is connected, he feels that his knowledge is pleasure ; and where he has no pleasure he has no knowledge. What then does the poet ? He considers man and the objects that surround him as acting and re-acting upon each other, so as to produce an infinite complexity of pain and pleasure ; he considers man in his own nature and in his ordinary life as contemplating this with a certain quantity of immediate knowledge, with certain convictions, intuitions, and deductions, which from habit acquire the quality of intuitions ; he considers him as looking upon this complex scene of ideas and sensations, and finding everywhere objects that immediately excite in him sympathies which, from the necessities of his nature, are accompanied by an overbalance of enjoyment.

To this knowledge which all men carry about with them, and to these sympathies in which, without any other discipline than that of our daily life, we are fitted to take delight, the poet principally directs his attention. He considers man and nature as essentially adapted to each other, and the mind of man as naturally the mirror of the fairest and most interesting properties of nature. And thus the poet, prompted by this feeling of pleasure, which accompanies him through the whole course of his studies, converses with general nature, with affections akin to those which, through labour and length of time, the man of science has raised up in himself by conversing with those particular parts of nature which are the objects of his studies. The knowledge both of the poet and the man of science is pleasure ; but the knowledge of the one cleaves to us as a necessary part of our existence, our natural and unalienable inheritance ; the other is a personal and individual acquisition, slow to come to us, and by no habitual and direct sympathy con-

necting us with our fellow-beings. The man of science seeks truth as a remote and unknown benefactor ; he cherishes and loves it in his solitude : the poet, singing a song in which all human beings join with him, rejoices in the presence of truth as our visible friend and hourly companion. Poetry is the breath and finer spirit of all knowledge ; it is the impassioned expression which is in the countenance of all science. Emphatically may it be said of the poet, as Shakespeare hath said of man, "that he looks before and after." He is the rock of defence for human nature ; an upholder and preserver, carrying everywhere with him relationship and love. In spite of difference of soil and climate, of language and manners, of laws and customs ; in spite of things silently gone out of mind, and things violently destroyed ; the poet binds together by passion and knowledge the vast empire of human society, as it is spread over the whole earth, and over all time. The objects of the poet's thoughts are everywhere : though the eyes and senses of man are, it is true, his favourite guides, yet he will follow wheresoever he can find an atmosphere of sensation in which to move his wings. Poetry is the first and last of all knowledge—it is as immortal as the heart of man. If the labours of men of science should ever create any material revolution, direct or indirect, in our condition, and in the impressions which we habitually receive, the poet will sleep then no more than at present ; he will be ready to follow the steps of the man of science, not only in those general indirect effects, but he will be at his side, carrying sensation into the midst of the objects of the science itself. The remotest discoveries of the chemist, the botanist, or mineralogist, will be as proper objects of the poet's art as any upon which it can be employed, if the time should ever come when these things shall be familiar to us, and the relations under which they are contemplated by the followers of these respective sciences shall be manifestly and palpably material to us as enjoying and suffering beings. If the time should ever come when what is now called science, thus familiarized to men, shall be ready to put on, as it were, a form of flesh and blood, the poet will lend his divine spirit to aid the transfiguration, and will welcome the being thus produced, as a dear and genuine inmate of the household of man.—It is not, then, to be supposed that any one,

who holds that sublime notion of poetry which I have attempted to convey, will break in upon the sanctity and truth of his pictures by transitory and accidental ornaments, and endeavour to excite admiration of himself by arts the necessity of which must manifestly depend upon the assumed meanness of his subject.

What has been thus far said applies to poetry in general, but especially to those parts of composition where the poet speaks through the mouths of his characters, and upon this point it appears to authorize the conclusion that there are few persons of good sense who would not allow that the dramatic parts of composition are defective in proportion as they deviate from the real language of nature and are coloured by a diction of the poet's own rather peculiar to him as an individual poet or belonging simply to poets in general to a body of men who from the circumstance of their compositions being in metre it is expected will employ a particular language.

It is not then in the dramatic parts of composition that we look for this distinction of language but still it may be proper and necessary where the poet speaks to us in his own person and character. To this I answer by referring the reader to the description before given of a poet. Among the qualities there enumerated as principally conducing to form a poet is implied nothing differing in kind from other men but only in degree. The sum of what was said is that the poet is chiefly distinguished from other men by a greater promptness to think and feel without immediate external excitement and a greater power in expressing such thoughts and feelings as are produced in him in that manner. But these passions and thoughts and feelings are the general passions and thoughts and feelings of men. And with what are they connected? Undoubtedly with our moral sentiments and animal sensations, and with the causes which excite these, with the operations of the elements, and the appearances of the visible universe; with storm and sunshine, with the revolutions of the seasons with cold and heat, with loss of friends and kindred, with injuries and resentments, gratitude and hope with fear and sorrow. These, and the like are the sensations and objects which the poet describes as they are the sensations of other men, and the objects which interest them. The poet thinks and feels in the spirit of human passions

How, then, can his language differ in any material degree from that of all other men? To feel vividly and see clearly? It might be proved that it is impossible. But supposing that this were not the case, the poet might then be allowed to use a peculiar language when expressing his feelings for his own gratification, or that of men like himself. But poets do not write for poets alone, but for men. Unless therefore we are advocates for that admiration which subsists upon ignorance and that pleasure which arises from hearing what we do not understand, the poet must descend from this supposed height and in order to excite rational sympathy, he must express himself as other men express themselves. To this it may be added, that while he is only selecting from the real language of men, or which amounts to the same thing, composing accurately in the spirit of such selection he is trading upon safe ground and we know what we are to expect from him. Our feelings are the same with respect to metre, for as it may be proper to remind the reader, the distinction of metre is regular and uniform and not, like that which is produced by what is usually called *poetic diction* arbitrary, and subject to infinite caprices upon which no calculation whatever can be made. In the one case the reader is utterly at the mercy of the poet, respecting what imagery or diction he may choose to connect with the passion; whereas, in the other, the metre obeys certain laws, to which the poet and reader both willingly submit because they are certain, and because no interference is made by them with the passion but such as the concurring testimony of ages has shown to heighten and improve the pleasure which co-exists with it.

It will now be proper to answer an obvious question namely Why, professing these opinions, have I written in verse? To this, in addition to such answer as is included in what has been already said, I reply, in the first place, Because, however I may have restricted myself there is still left open to me what confessedly constitutes the most valuable object of all writing, whether in prose or verse, the great and universal passions of men the most general and interesting of their occupations, and the entire world of nature before me—to supply endless combinations of forms and imagery. Now, supposing for a moment that whatever is interesting in these objects may be as vividly described in prose, why

should I be condemned for attempting to superadd to such description, the charm which, by the consent of all nations, is acknowledged to exist in metrical language? To this, by such as are yet unconvinced, it may be answered that a very small part of the pleasure given by poetry depends upon the metre, and that it is injudicious to write in metre unless it be accompanied with the other artificial distinctions of style with which metre is usually accompanied, and that, by such deviation, more will be lost from the shock which will thereby be given to the reader's associations than will be counterbalanced by any pleasure which he can derive from the general power of numbers. In answer to those who still contend for the necessity of accompanying metre with certain appropriate colours of style in order to the accomplishment of its appropriate end, and who also, in my opinion, greatly under-rate the power of metre in itself, it might, perhaps, as far as relates to these volumes, have been almost sufficient to observe, that poems are extant, written upon more humble subjects, and in a still more naked and simple style, which have continued to give pleasure from generation to generation. Now, if nakedness and simplicity be a defect, the fact here mentioned affords a strong presumption that poems somewhat less naked and simple are capable of affording pleasure at the present day; and, what I wished chiefly to attempt, at present, was to justify myself for having written under the impression of this belief.

But various causes might be pointed out why, when the style is manly, and the subject of some importance, words metrically arranged will long continue to impart such a pleasure to mankind as he who proves the extent of that pleasure will be desirous to impart. The end of poetry is to produce excitement in co-existence with an overbalance of pleasure; but, by the supposition, excitement is an unusual and irregular state of the mind; ideas and feelings do not, in that state, succeed each other in accustomed order. If the words, however, by which this excitement is produced be in themselves powerful, or the images and feelings have an undue proportion of pain connected with them, there is some danger that the excitement may be carried beyond its proper bounds. Now the co-presence of something regular, something to which the mind has been accustomed

in various moods and in a less excited state, cannot but have great efficacy in tempering and restraining the passion by an intertexture of ordinary feeling, and of feeling not strictly and necessarily connected with the passion. This is unquestionably true; and hence, though the opinion will at first appear paradoxical, from the tendency of metre to divest language, in a certain degree, of its reality, and thus to throw a sort of half-consciousness of unsubstantial existence over the whole composition, there can be little doubt but that more pathetic situations and sentiments, that is, those which have a greater proportion of pain connected with them, may be endured in metrical composition, especially in rhyme, than in prose. The metre of the old ballads is very artless; yet they contain many passages which would illustrate this opinion; and, I hope, if the following poems be attentively perused, similar instances will be found in them. This opinion may be further illustrated by appealing to the reader's own experience of the reluctance with which he comes to the re-perusal of the distressful parts of "Clarissa Harlowe," or "The Gamester," while Shakespeare's writings, in the most pathetic scenes, never act upon us, as pathetic, beyond the bounds of pleasure—an effect which, in a much greater degree than might at first be imagined, is to be ascribed to small, but continual and regular impulses of pleasurable surprise from the metrical arrangement.—On the other hand (what it must be allowed will much more frequently happen), if the poet's words should be incommensurate with the passion, and inadequate to raise the reader to a height of desirable excitement, then (unless the poet's choice of his metre has been grossly injudicious), in the feelings of pleasure which the reader has been accustomed to connect with metre in general, and in the feeling, whether cheerful or melancholy, which he has been accustomed to connect with that particular movement of metre, there will be found something which will greatly contribute to impart passion to the words, and to effect the complex end which the poet proposes to himself.

If I had undertaken a SYSTEMATIC defence of the theory here maintained, it would have been my duty to develop the various causes upon which the pleasure received from metrical language depends. Among the chief of these causes is to be reckoned a principle which must be well known to those who

have made any of the Arts the object of accurate reflection; namely, the pleasure which the mind derives from the perception of similitude in dissimilitude. This principle is the great spring of the activity of our minds, and their chief feeder. From, this principle the direction of the sexual appetite, and all the passions connected with it, take their origin: it is the life of our ordinary conversation; and upon the accuracy with which similitude in dissimilitude, and dissimilitude in similitude are perceived, depend our taste and our moral feelings. It would not be a useless employment to apply this principle to the consideration of metre, and to show that metre is hence enabled to afford much pleasure, and to point out in what manner that pleasure is produced. But my limits will not permit me to enter upon this subject, and I must content myself with a general summary.

I have said that poetry is the spontaneous overflow of powerful feelings: it takes its origin from emotion recollected in tranquillity: the emotion is contemplated till, by a species of reaction, the tranquillity gradually disappears, and an emotion, kindred to that which was before the subject of contemplation, is gradually produced, and does itself actually exist in the mind. In this mood successful composition generally begins, and in a mood similar to this it is carried on; but the emotion, of whatever kind, and in whatever degree, from various causes, is qualified by various pleasures, so that in describing any passions whatsoever, which are voluntarily described, the mind will, upon the whole, be in a state of enjoyment. If Nature be thus cautious to preserve in a state of enjoyment a being so employed, the poet ought to profit by the lesson held forth to him, and ought especially to take care, that, whatever passions he communicates to his reader, those passions, if his reader's mind be sound and vigorous, should always be accompanied with an overbalance of pleasure. Now the music of harmonious metrical language, the sense of difficulty overcome, and the blind association of pleasure which has been previously received from works of rhyme or metre of the same or similar construction, an indistinct perception perpetually renewed of language closely resembling that of real life, and yet, in the circumstance of metre, differing from it so widely—all these imperceptibly make up a complex feeling of delight, which is of the most

important use in tempering the painful feeling always found intermingled with powerful descriptions of the deeper passions. This effect is always produced in pathetic and impassioned poetry, while, in lighter compositions, the ease and gracefulness with which the poet manages his numbers are themselves confessedly a principal source of the gratification of the reader. All that it is necessary to say, however, upon this subject, may be effected by affirming, what few persons will deny, that, of two descriptions, either of passions, manners, or characters, each of them equally well executed, the one in prose and the other in verse, the verse will be read a hundred times where the prose is read once.

Having thus explained a few of my reasons for writing in verse, and why I have chosen subjects from common life, and endeavoured to bring my language near to the real language of men, if I have been too minute in pleading my own cause, I have at the same time been treating a subject of general interest; and for this reason a few words shall be added with reference solely to these particular poems, and to some defects which will probably be found in them. I am sensible that my associations must have sometimes been particular instead of general, and that, consequently, giving to things a false importance, I may have sometimes written upon unworthy subjects; but I am less apprehensive on this account, than that my language may frequently have suffered from those arbitrary connexions of feelings and ideas with particular words and phrases, from which no man can altogether protect himself. Hence I have no doubt that, in some instances, feelings, even of the ludicrous, may be given to my readers by expressions, which appeared to me tender and pathetic. Such faulty expressions, were I convinced they were faulty at present, and that they must necessarily continue to be so, I would willingly take all reasonable pains to correct. But it is dangerous to make these alterations on the simple authority of a few individuals, or even of certain classes of men; for where the understanding of an author is not convinced, or his feelings altered, this cannot be done without great injury to himself: for his own feelings are his stay and support; and, if he set them aside in one instance, he may be induced to repeat this act till his mind shall lose all confidence in itself, and become utterly debilitated. To this it may be added, that the critic

ought never to forget that he is himself exposed to the same errors as the poet, and, perhaps, in a much greater degree: for there can be no presumption in saying of most readers, that it is not probable they will be so well acquainted with the various stages of meaning through which words have passed, or with the fickleness or stability of the relations of particular ideas to each other; and, above all, since they are so much less interested in the subject, they may decide lightly and carelessly.

Long as the reader has been detained, I hope he will permit me to caution him against a mode of false criticism which has been applied to poetry, in which the language closely resembles that of life and nature. Such verses have been triumphed over in parodies, of which Dr. Johnson's stanza is a fair specimen:—

"I put my hat upon my head
And walked into the Strand,
And there I met another man
Whose hat was in his hand."

Immediately under these lines let us place one of the most justly-admired stanzas of "The Babes in the Wood."

"These pretty Babes with hand in hand
Went wandering up and down;
But never more they saw the Man
Approaching from the Town."

In both these stanzas the words, and the order of the words, in no respect differ from the most unimpassioned conversation. There are words in both, for example, "the Strand," and "the Town," connected with none but the most familiar ideas; yet, the one stanza we admit as admirable, and the other as a fair example of the superlatively contemptible. Whence arises this difference? Not from the metre, not from the language, not from the order of the words; but the *manner* expressed in Dr. Johnson's stanza is contemptible. The proper method of treating trivial and simple verses, to which Dr. Johnson's stanza would be a fair parallelism, is not to say this is a bad kind of poetry, or, this is not poetry; but, this wants sense; it is neither interesting in itself, nor can it lead to anything interesting; the images neither originate in that sane state of feeling which arises out of thought, nor can excite thought or feeling in the reader. This is the only sensible manner of dealing with such verses. Why trouble yourself about the species till you have previously decided upon the genus? Why take pains to prove

that an ape is not a Newton, when it is self-evident that he is not a man?

One request I must make of my reader, which is, that in judging these poems he would decide by his own feelings genuinely, and not by reflection upon what will probably be the judgment of others. How common is it to hear a person say, I myself do not object to this style of composition, or this or that expression, but, to such and such classes of people it will appear mean or ludicrous! This mode of criticism, so destructive of all sound unadulterated judgment, is almost universal: let the reader then abide, independently, by his own feelings, and, if he finds himself affected, let him not suffer such conjectures to interfere with his pleasure.

If an author, by any single composition, has impressed us with respect for his talents, it is useful to consider this as affording a presumption, that on other occasions where we have been displeased, he, nevertheless, may not have written ill or absurdly; and further, to give him so much credit for this one composition as may induce us to review what has displeased us, with more care than we should otherwise have bestowed upon it. This is not only an act of justice, but, in our decisions upon poetry especially, may conduce, in a high degree, to the improvement of our own taste: for an *accurate* taste in poetry, and in all the other arts, as Sir Joshua Reynolds has observed, is an *acquired* talent, which can only be produced by thought and a long-continued intercourse with the best models of composition. This is mentioned, not with so ridiculous a purpose as to prevent the most inexperienced reader from judging for himself (I have already said that I wish him to judge for himself); but merely to temper the rashness of decision, and to suggest that, if poetry be a subject on which much time has not been bestowed, the judgment may be erroneous; and that, in many cases, it necessarily will be so.

Nothing would, I know, have so effectually contributed to further the end which I have in view, as to have shown of what kind the pleasure is, and how that pleasure is produced, which is confessedly produced by metrical composition essentially different from that which I have here endeavoured to recommend: for the reader will say that he has been pleased by such composition; and what more can be done for him? The power of any art is limited; and he will suspect, that, if it be proposed to

furnish him with new friends, that can be only upon condition of his abandoning his old friends. Besides, as I have said, the reader is himself conscious of the pleasure which he has received from such composition, composition to which he has peculiarly attached the endearing name of poetry; and all men feel an habitual gratitude, and something of an honourable bigotry, for the objects which have long continued to please them: we not only wish to be pleased, but to be pleased in that particular way in which we have been accustomed to be pleased. There is in these feelings enough to resist a host of arguments; and I should be the less able to combat them successfully, as I am willing to allow, that, in order entirely to enjoy the poetry which I am recommending, it would be necessary to give up much of what is ordinarily enjoyed. But, would my limits have permitted me to point out how this pleasure is produced, many obstacles might have been removed, and the reader assisted in perceiving that the powers of language are not so limited

as he may suppose; and that it is possible for poetry to give other enjoyments, of a purer, more lasting, and more exquisite nature. This part of the subject has not been altogether neglected, but it has not been so much my present aim to prove, that the interest excited by some other kinds of poetry is less vivid, and less worthy of the nobler powers of the mind, as to offer reasons for presuming that, if my purpose were fulfilled, a species of poetry would be produced which is genuine poetry; in its nature well adapted to interest mankind permanently, and likewise important in the multiplicity and quality of its moral relations.

From what has been said, and from a perusal of the poems, the reader will be able clearly to perceive the object which I had in view: he will determine how far it has been attained; and what is a much more important question, whether it be worth attaining; and upon the decision of these two questions will rest my claim to the approbation of the Public.

APPENDIX

See page 704—"by what is usually called POETIC DICTION."

PERHAPS, as I have no right to expect that attentive perusal, without which, confined, as I have been, to the narrow limits of a preface, my meaning cannot be thoroughly understood, I am anxious to give an exact notion of the sense in which the phrase poetic diction has been used; and for this purpose, a few words shall here be added, concerning the origin and characteristics of the phraseology, which I have condemned under that name.

The earliest poets of all nations generally wrote from passion excited by real events; they wrote naturally, and as men: feeling powerfully as they did, their language was daring, and figurative. In succeeding times, poets, and men ambitious of the fame of poets, perceiving the influence of such language, and desirous of producing the same effect without being animated by the same passion, set themselves to a mechanical adoption of these figures of speech, and made use of them, sometimes with propriety, but much more frequently

applied them to feelings and thoughts, with which they had no natural connexion whatsoever. A language was thus insensibly produced, differing materially from the real language of men in *any situation*. The reader or hearer of this distorted language found himself in a perturbed and unusual state of mind: when affected by the genuine language of passion, he had been in a perturbed and unusual state of mind also: in both cases he was willing that his common judgment and understanding should be laid asleep, and he had no instinctive, and infallible perception of the true to make him reject the false; the one served as a passport for the other. The emotion was in both cases delightful, and no wonder if he confounded the one with the other, and believed them both to be produced by the same, or similar causes. Besides, the poet spake to him in the character of a man to be looked up to, a man of genius and authority. Thus, and from a variety of other causes, this distorted language was received with

admiration; and poets, it is probable, who had before contented themselves for the most part with misapplying only expressions which at first had been dictated by real passion, carried the abuse still further, and introduced phrases composed apparently in the spirit of the original figurative language of passion, yet altogether of their own invention, and characterized by various degrees of wanton deviation from good sense and nature.

It is indeed true, that the language of the earliest poets was felt to differ materially from ordinary language, because it was the language of extraordinary occasions; but it was really spoken by men, language which the poet himself had uttered when he had been affected by the events which he described, or which he had heard uttered by those around him. To this language it is probable that metre of some sort or other was early superadded. This separated the genuine language of poetry still further from common life, so that whoever read or heard the poems of these earliest poets felt himself moved in a way in which he had not been accustomed to be moved in real life, and by causes manifestly different from those which acted upon him in real life. This was the great temptation to all the corruptions which have followed: under the protection of this feeling succeeding poets constructed a phraseology which had one thing, it is true, in common with the genuine language of poetry, namely, that it was not heard in ordinary conversation; that it was unusual. But the first poets, as I have said, spake a language which, though unusual, was still the language of men. This circumstance, however, was disregarded by their successors; they found that they could please by easier means: they became proud of modes of expression which they themselves had invented, and which were uttered only by themselves. In process of time metre became a symbol or promise of this unusual language, and whoever took upon him to write in metre, according as he possessed more or less of true poetic genius, introduced less or more of this adulterated phraseology into his compositions, and the true and the false were inseparably interwoven until, the taste of men becoming gradually perverted, this language was received as a natural language: and at length, by the influence of books upon men, did to a certain degree really

become so. Abuses of this kind were imported from one nation to another, and with the progress of refinement this diction became daily more and more corrupt, thrusting out of sight the plain humanities of nature by a motley masquerade of tricks, quaintnesses, hieroglyphics, and enigmas.

It would not be uninteresting to point out the causes of the pleasure given by this extravagant and absurd diction. It depends upon a great variety of causes, but upon none, perhaps, more than its influence in impressing a notion of the peculiarity and exaltation of the poet's character, and in flattering the reader's self-love by bringing him nearer to a sympathy with that character; an effect which is accomplished by unsettling ordinary habits of thinking, and thus assisting the reader to approach to that perturbed and dizzy state of mind in which if he does not find himself, he imagines that he is basking of a peculiar enjoyment which poetry can and ought to bestow.

The sonnet quoted from Gray, in the preface, except the lines printed in italics, consists of little else but this diction, though not of the worst kind; and indeed, if one may be permitted to say so, it is far too common in the best writers both ancient and modern. Perhaps in no way, by positive example, could more easily be given a notion of what I mean by the phrase *poetic diction* than by referring to a comparison between the metrical paraphrase which we have of passages in the Old and New Testament, and those passages as they exist in our common Translation. See Pope's "Messiah" throughout; Prior's "Did sweeter sounds adorn my flowing tongue," etc., etc. "Though I speak with the tongues of men and of angels," etc., etc. (1st Corinthians, chap. xiii.). By way of immediate example, take the following of Dr. Johnson:—

"Turn on the prudent Ant thy heedless eyes,
Observe her labours, Sluggard, and be wise;
No stern command, no monitory voice,
Prescribes her duties, or directs her choice;
Yet, timely provident, she hastes away
To snatch the blessings of a plenteous day;
When fruitful Summer loads the teeming plain,
She crops the harvest, and she stores the grain.

How long shall sloth usurp thy useless
hours,
Unnerve thy vigour, and enchain thy
powers?
While artful shades thy downy couch
enclose,
And soft solicitation courts repose,
Amidst the drowsy charms of dull
delight,
Year chases year with unremitted
flight,
Till Want now following, fraudulent
and slow,
Shall spring to seize thee, like an
ambush'd foe."

From this hubbub of words pass to the original. "Go to the Ant, thou Sluggard, consider her ways, and be wise: which having no guide, overseer, or ruler, provideth her meat in the summer, and gathereth her food in the harvest. How long wilt thou sleep, O Sluggard? when wilt thou arise out of thy sleep? Yet a little sleep, a little slumber, a little folding of the hands to sleep. So shall thy poverty come as one that travelleth, and thy want as an armed man" (Proverbs, chap. vi.).

One more quotation, and I have done. It is from Cowper's Verses supposed to be written by Alexander Selkirk:—

"Religion! what treasure untold
Resides in that heavenly word!
More precious than silver and gold,
Or all that this earth can afford.
But the sound of the church-going bell
These valleys and rocks never heard,
Ne'er sighed at the sound of a knell,
Or smiled when a sabbath appeared.

Ye winds, that have made me your
sport,
Convey to this desolate shore
Some cordial endearing report
Of a land I must visit no more.
My Friends, do they now and then
send

A wish or thought after me?
O tell me I yet have a friend,
Though a friend I am never to see."

This passage is quoted as an instance of three different styles of composition. The first four lines are poorly expressed; some critics would call the language prosaic; the fact is, it would be bad prose, so bad, that it is scarcely worse in metre. The epithet "church-going" applied to a bell, and that by so chaste a writer as Cowper, is an instance of the strange abuses which poets have introduced into their language, till they and their readers take them as matters of course, if they do not single them out expressly as objects of admiration. The two lines, "Ne'er sighed at the sound," are, in my opinion, an instance of the language of passion wrested from its proper use, and from the mere circumstance of the composition being in metre, applied upon an occasion that does not justify such violent expressions; and I should condemn the passage, though perhaps few readers will agree with me, as vicious poetical diction. The last stanza is throughout admirably expressed: it would be equally good whether in prose or verse, except that the reader has an exquisite pleasure in seeing such natural language so naturally connected with metre. The beauty of this stanza tempts me to conclude with a principle which ought never to be lost sight of, and which has been my chief guide in all I have said,—namely, that in works of *imagination and sentiment*, for of these only have I been treating, in proportion as ideas and feelings are valuable, whether the composition be in prose or in verse, they require and exact one and the same language. Metre is but adventitious to composition, and the phraseology for which that passport is necessary, even where it may be graceful at all, will be little valued by the the judicious.

ESSAY, SUPPLEMENTARY TO THE PREFACE

With the young of both sexes, poetry is, like love, a passion; but, for much the greater part of those who have been proud of its power over their minds, a necessity soon arises of breaking the pleasing bondage; or it relaxes of itself;

—the thoughts being occupied in domestic cares, or the time engrossed by business. Poetry then becomes only an occasional recreation; while to those whose existence passes away in a course of fashionable pleasure, it is a species

of luxurious amusement. In middle and declining age, a scattered number of serious persons resort to poetry, as to religion, for a protection against the pressure of trivial employments, and as a consolation for the afflictions of life. And, lastly, there are many, who, having been enamoured of this art in their youth, have found leisure, after youth was spent, to cultivate general literature; in which poetry has continued to be comprehended as a study.

Into the above classes the readers of poetry may be divided; critics abound in them all; but from the last only can opinions be collected of absolute value, and worthy to be depended upon, as prophetic of the destiny of a new work. The young, who in nothing can escape delusion, are especially subject to it in their intercourse with poetry. The cause, not so obvious as the fact is unquestionable, is the same as that from which erroneous judgments in this art, in the minds of men of all ages, chiefly proceed; but upon Youth it operates with peculiar force. The appropriate business of poetry (which, nevertheless, if genuine, is as permanent as pure science), her appropriate employment, her privilege and her duty, is to treat of things not as they are, but as they appear; not as they exist in themselves, but as they seem to exist to the sense, and to the passions. What a world of delusion does this acknowledge! obligation prepare for the inexperienced! What temptations to go astray are here held forth for them whose thoughts have been little disciplined by the understanding, and whose feelings revolt from the sway of reason!—When a juvenile reader is in the height of his rapture with some vicious passage, should experience throw in doubts, or common-sense suggest suspicions, & lurking consciousness that the realities of the Muse are but shows, and that her liveliest excitements are raised by transient shocks of conflicting feeling and successive assemblages of contradictory thoughts is ever at hand to justify extravagance, and to sanction absurdity. But, it may be asked, as these illusions are unavoidable, and, no doubt, eminently useful to the mind as a process, what good can be gained by making observations, the tendency of which is to diminish the confidence of youth in its feelings, and thus to abridge its innocent and even profitable pleasures? The reproach implied in the question could not be warded off, if Youth were incap-

able of being delighted with what is truly excellent; or, if these errors always terminated of themselves in due season. But, with the majority, though their force be abated, they continue through life. Moreover, the fire of youth is too vivacious an element to be extinguished or damped by a philosophical remark; and, while there is no danger that what has been said will be injurious or painful to the ardent and the confident, it may prove beneficial to those who, being enthusiastic, are, at the same time, modest and ingenuous. The intimation may unite with their own misgivings to regulate their sensibility, and to bring in, sooner than it would otherwise have arrived, a more discreet and sound judgment.

If it should excite wonder that men of ability, in later life, whose understandings have been rendered acute by practice in affairs, should be so easily and so far imposed upon when they happen to take up a new work in verse, this appears to be the cause;—that, having discontinued their attention to poetry, whatever progress may have been made in other departments of knowledge, they have not, as to this art, advanced in true discernment beyond the age of youth. If, then, a new poem fall in their way, whose attractions are of that kind which would have enraptured them during the heat of youth, the judgment not being improved to a degree that they shall be disgusted, they are dazzled; and prize and cherish the faults for having had power to make the present time vanish before them, and to throw the mind back, as by enchantment, into the happiest season of life. As they read, powers seem to be revived, passions are regenerated, and pleasures restored. The book was probably taken up after an escape from the burden of business, and with a wish to forget the world and all its vexations and anxieties. Having obtained this wish, and so much more, it is natural that they should make report as they have felt.

If men of mature age, through want of practice, be thus easily beguiled into admiration of absurdities, extravagances, and misplaced ornaments, thinking it proper that their understandings should enjoy a holiday, while they are unbending their minds with verse, it may be expected that such readers will resemble their former selves also in strength of prejudice, and an inaptitude to be moved by the unostentatious beauties of a pure style. In the higher poetry, an

enlightened critic chiefly looks for a reflection of the wisdom of the heart and the grandeur of the imagination. Wherever these appear, simplicity accompanies them; magnificence herself, when legitimate, depending upon a simplicity of her own, to regulate her ornaments. But it is a well-known property of human nature, that our estimates are ever governed by comparison, of which we are conscious with various degrees of distinctness. Is it not, then, inevitable (confining these observations to the effects of style merely) that an eye, accustomed to the glaring hues of diction by which such readers are caught and excited, will for the most part be rather repelled than attracted by an original work, the colouring of which is disposed according to a pure and refined scheme of harmony? It is in the fine arts as in the affairs of life, no man can *serve* (i.e. obey with zeal and fidelity) two masters.

As Poetry is most just to its own divine origin when it administers the comforts and breathes the spirit of religion, they who have learned to perceive this truth, and who betake themselves to reading verse for sacred purposes, must be preserved from numerous illusions to which the two classes of readers, whom we have been considering, are liable. But, as the mind grows serious from the weight of life, the range of its passions is contracted accordingly; and its sympathies become so exclusive, that many species of high excellence wholly escape, or but languidly excite, its notice. Besides, men who read from religious or moral inclinations, even when the subject is of that kind which they approve, are beset with misconceptions and mistakes peculiar to themselves. Attaching so much importance to the truths which interest them, they are prone to over-rate the authors by whom those truths are expressed and enforced. They come prepared to impart so much passion to the poet's language, that they remain unconscious how little, in fact, they receive from it. And, on the other hand, religious faith is to him who holds it so momentous a thing, and error appears to be attended with such tremendous consequences, that, if opinions touching upon religion occur which the reader condemns, he not only cannot sympathize with them, however animated the expression, but there is, for the most part, an end put to all satisfaction and enjoyment. Love, if it before existed, is converted into dislike;

and the heart of the reader is set against the author and his book.—To these excesses, they, who from their professions ought to be the most guarded against them, are perhaps the most liable; I mean those sects whose religion, being from the calculating understanding, is cold and formal. For when Christianity, the religion of humility, is founded upon the proudest faculty of our nature, what can be expected but contradictions? Accordingly, believers of this ~~cast~~ are, at one time contemptuous; at another, being troubled, as they are and must be, with inward misgivings, they are jealous and suspicious;—and at all seasons, they are under temptation to supply, by the heat with which they defend their tenets, the animation which is wanting to the constitution of the religion itself.

Faith was given to man that his affections, detached from the treasures of time, might be inclined to settle upon those of eternity;—the elevation of his nature, which this habit produces on earth, being to him a presumptive evidence of a future state of existence; and giving him a title to partake of its holiness. The religious man values what he sees chiefly as an "imperfect shadowing forth" of what he is incapable of seeing. The concerns of religion refer to indefinite objects, and are too weighty for the mind to support them without relieving itself by resting a great part of the burthen upon words and symbols. The commerce between man and his Maker cannot be carried on but by a process where much is represented in little, and the Infinite Being accommodates Himself to a finite capacity. In all this may be perceived the affinity between religion and poetry; between religion—making up the deficiencies of reason by faith; and poetry—passionate for the instruction of reason; between religion—whose element is infinitude, and whose ultimate trust is the supreme of things, submitting herself to circumscription, and reconciled to substitutions; and poetry—ethereal and transcendent, yet incapable to sustain her existence without sensuous incarnation. In this community of nature may be perceived also the lurking incitements of kindred error;—so that we shall find that no poetry has been more subject to distortion, than that species, the argument and scope of which is religious; and no lovers of the art have gone farther astray than the pious and the devout.

Whither then shall we turn for that union of qualifications which must

necessarily exist before the decisions of a critic can be of absolute value? For a mind at once poetical and philosophical; for a critic whose affections are as free and kindly as the spirit of society, and whose understanding is severe as that of dispassionate government? Where are we to look for that initiatory composure of mind which no selfishness can disturb? For a natural sensibility that has been tutored into correctness without losing anything of its quickness; and for active faculties, capable of answering the demands which an author of original imagination shall make upon them, associated with a judgment that cannot be duped into admiration by ought that is unworthy of it?—among those and those only, who never having suffered their youthful love of poetry to remit much of its force, have applied to the consideration of the laws of this art the best power of their understandings. At the same time it must be observed—that, as this class comprehends the only judgments which are trustworthy, so does it include the most erroneous and perverse. For to be mis-taught is worse than to be untaught, and no perverseness equals that which is supported by system, no errors are so difficult to root out as those which the understanding has pledged its credit to uphold. In this class are contained censors who, if they be pleased with what is good, are pleased with it only by imperfect glimpses, and upon false principles; who, should they generalize rightly, to a certain point, are sure to suffer for it in the end; who, if they stumble upon a sound rule, are fettered by misapplying it, or by straining it too far; being incapable of perceiving when it ought to yield to one of higher order. In it are found critics too petulant to be passive to a genuine poet, and too feeble to grapple with him; men, who take upon them to report of the course which he holds whom they are utterly unable to accompany,—confounded if he turn quick upon the wing, dismayed if he soar steadily “into the region”;—men of pale imaginations and indurated hearts; in whose minds all healthy action is languid, who therefore feed as the many direct them, or, with the many, are greedy after vicious provocatives—judges, whose censure is auspicious, and whose praise ominous! In this class meet together the two extremes of best and worst.

The observations presented in the foregoing series are of too ungracious a

nature to have been made without reluctance; and, were it only on this account, I would invite the reader to try them by the test of comprehensive experience. If the number of judges who can be confidently relied upon be in reality so small, it ought to follow that partial notice only, or neglect, perhaps long continued, or attention wholly inadequate to their merits—must have been the fate of most works in the higher departments of poetry; and that, on the other hand, numerous productions have blazed into popularity, and have passed away, leaving scarcely a trace behind them: it will be further found, that when authors shall have at length raised themselves into general admiration and maintained their ground, errors and prejudices have prevailed concerning their genius and their works, which the few who are conscious of those errors and prejudices would deplore; if they were not recompensed by perceiving that there are select spirits for whom it is ordained that their fame shall be in the world an existence like that of Virtue, which owes its being to the struggles it makes, and its vigour to the enemies whom it provokes;—a vivacious quality, ever doomed to meet with opposition, and still triumphing over it; and from the nature of its dominion, incapable of being brought to the sad conclusion of Alexander, when he wept that there were no more worlds for him to conquer.

Let us take a hasty retrospect of the poetical literature of this country for the greater part of the last two centuries, and see if the facts support these inferences.

Who is there that now reads the “Creation” of Dubartas? Yet all Europe once resounded with his praise; he was caressed by kings; and, when his Poem was translated into our language, *The Faery Queen* faded before it. The name of Spenser, whose genius is of a higher order than even that of Ariosto, is at this day scarcely known beyond the limits of the British Isles. And if the value of his works is to be estimated from the attention now paid to them by his countrymen, compared with that which they bestow on those of some other writers it must be pronounced small indeed.

“The laurel, meed of mighty conquerors
And poets sage”—

are his own words; but his wisdom has, in this particular, been his worst enemy; while its opposite, whether in the shape

or folly or madness, has been *their* best friend. But he was a great power, and bears a high name: the laurel has been awarded to him.

A dramatic author, if he write for the stage, must adapt himself to the taste of the audience, or they will not endure him; accordingly the mighty genius of Shakespeare was listened to. The people were delighted: but I am not sufficiently versed in stage antiquities to determine whether they did not flock as eagerly to the representation of many pieces of contemporary authors, wholly undeserving to appear upon the same boards. Had there been a formal contest for superiority among dramatic writers, that Shakespeare, like his predecessors Sophocles and Euripides, would have often been subject to the mortification of seeing the prize adjudged to sorry competitors, becomes too probable, when we reflect that the admirers of Settle and Shadwell were, in a later age, as numerous, and reckoned as respectable in point of talent, as those of Dryden. At all events, that Shakespeare stooped to accommodate himself to the People, is sufficiently apparent; and one of the most striking proofs of his almost omnipotent genius is, that he could turn to such glorious purpose those materials which the prepossessions of the age compelled him to make use of. Yet even this marvellous skill appears not to have been enough to prevent his rivals from having some advantage over him in public estimation; else how can we account for passages and scenes that exist in his works, unless upon a supposition that some of the grossest of them, a fact which in my own mind I have no doubt of, were foisted in by the players, for the gratification of the many?

But that his works, whatever might be their reception upon the stage, made but little impression upon the ruling intellects of the time, may be inferred from the fact that Lord Bacon, in his multifarious writings, nowhere either quotes or alludes to him.¹—His dramatic excellence enabled him to resume pos-

session of the stage after the Restoration; but Dryden tells us that in his time two of the plays of Beaumont and Fletcher, were acted for one of Shakespeare's. And so faint and limited was the perception of the poetic beauties of his dramas in the time of Pope, that, in his edition of the plays, with a view of rendering to the general reader a necessary service, he printed between inverted commas those passages which he thought most worthy of notice.

At this day, the French critics have abated nothing of their aversion to this darling of our nation: "the English with their bouffon de Shakespeare," is as familiar an expression among them as in the time of Voltaire. Baron Grimm is the only French writer who seems to have perceived his infinite superiority to the first names of the French Theatre; an advantage which the Parisian critic owed to his German blood and German education. The most enlightened Italians, though well acquainted with our language, are wholly incompetent to measure the proportions of Shakespeare. The Germans only, of foreign nations, are approaching towards a knowledge and feeling of what he is. In some respects they have acquired a superiority over the fellow-countrymen of the poet: for among us it is a current, I might say, an established opinion, that Shakespeare is justly praised when he is pronounced to be "a wild, irregular genius, in whom great faults are compensated by great beauties." How long may it be before this misconception passes away, and it becomes universally acknowledged that the judgment of Shakespeare in the selection of his materials, and in the manner in which he has made them, heterogeneous as they often are, constitute a unity of their own, and contribute all to one great end, is not less admirable than his imagination, his invention, and his intuitive knowledge of human nature!

There is extant a small volume of miscellaneous poems, in which Shakespeare expresses his own feelings in his own person. It is not difficult to conceive that the editor, George Steevens, should have been insensible to the beauties of one portion of that volume, the sonnets; though in no part of the writings of this poet is found, in an equal compass, a greater number of exquisite feelings felicitously expressed. But, from regard to the critic's own credit, he would not have ventured to talk of

¹ The learned Hakewill (a third edition of whose book bears date 1635), writing to refute the error "touching Nature's perpetual and universal decay," cites triumphantly the names of Aristo, Tasso, Bartas and Spenser as instances that poetic genius had not degenerated; but he makes no mention of Shakespeare.

an act of parliament not being strong enough to compel the perusal of those little pieces, if he had not known that the people of England were ignorant of the treasures contained in them; and if he had not, moreover, shared the too common propensity of human nature to exult over a supposed fall into the mire of a genius whom he had been compelled to regard with admiration, as an inmate of the celestial regions—"there, sitting, where he durst not stir."

Nine years before the death of Shakespeare, Milton was born; and early in life he published several small poems, which, though on their first appearance they were praised by a few of the judicious, were afterwards neglected to that degree, that Pope in his youth could borrow from them without risk of its being known. Whether these poems are at this day justly appreciated, I will not undertake to decide; nor would it imply a severe reflection upon the mass of readers to suppose the contrary; seeing that a man of the acknowledged genius of Voss, the German poet, could suffer their spirit to evaporate; and could change their character, as is done in the translation made by him of the most popular of those pieces. At all events, it is certain that these poems of Milton are now much read, and loudly praised; yet were they little heard of till more than 150 years after their publication; and of the sonnets, Dr. Johnson, as appears from Boswell's Life of him, was in the habit of thinking and speaking as contemptuously as Stevens wrote upon those of Shakespeare.

About the time when the Pindaric odes of Cowley and his imitators, and the productions of that class of curious thinkers whom Dr. Johnson has strangely styled metaphysical poets, were beginning to lose something of that extravagant admiration which they had excited, the *Paradise Lost* made its appearance. "Fit audience find though few," was the petition addressed by the poet to his inspiring Muse. I have said elsewhere that he gained more than he asked;

this I believe to be true; but Dr. Johnson has fallen into a gross mistake when he attempts to prove, by the sale of the work, that Milton's countrymen were "just to it" upon its first appearance. Thirteen hundred copies were sold in two years; an uncommon example, he asserts, of the prevalence of genius in opposition to so much recent enmity as Milton's public conduct had excited. But, be it remembered that, if Milton's political and religious opinions, and the manner in which he announced them, had raised him many enemies, they had procured him numerous friends; who, as all personal danger was passed away at the time of publication, would be eager to procure the masterwork of a man whom they revered, and whom they would be proud of praising. Take, from the number of purchasers, persons of this class, and also those who wished to possess the poem as a religious work, and but few I fear would be left who sought for it on account of its poetical merits. The demand did not immediately increase; "for," says Dr. Johnson, "many more readers" (he means persons in the habit of reading poetry) "than were supplied at first the Nation did not afford." How careless must a writer be who can make this assertion in the face of so many existing title-pages to belie it! Turning to my own shelves, I find the folio of Cowley, seventh edition, 1681. A book near it is Flatman's Poems, fourth edition, 1686; Waller, fifth edition, same date. The poems of Norris of Bemerton not long after went, I believe, through nine editions. What further demand there might be for these works I do not know; but I well remember, that, twenty-five years ago, the booksellers' stalls in London swarmed with the folios of Cowley. This is not mentioned in disparagement of that able writer and amiable man; but merely to show—that, if Milton's work were not more read, it was not because readers did not exist at the time. The early editions of the *Paradise Lost* were printed in a shape which allowed them to be sold at a low price, yet only three thousand copies of the work were sold in eleven years; and the Nation, says Dr. Johnson, had been satisfied from 1623 to 1664, that is, forty-one years, with only two editions of the works of Shakespeare; which probably did not together make one thousand copies; facts adduced by the critic to prove the "paucity of readers."—There were readers in multitudes; but their money went for other purposes,

* This hippant, insensibility was publicly reprehended by Mr. Coleridge in a course of Lectures upon Poetry given by him at the Royal Institution. For the various merits of thought and language in Shakespeare's Sonnets, see Numbers 27, 29, 30, 32, 33, 54, 64, 66, 68, 73, 76, 86, 91, 92, 93, 97, 98, 105, 107, 108, 109, 111, 113, 114, 116, 117, 129, and many others.

as their admiration was fixed elsewhere. We are authorized, then, to affirm that the reception of the *Paradise Lost* and the slow progress of its fame, are proofs as striking as can be desired that the positions which I am attempting to establish are not erroneous.¹—How amusing to shape to one's self such a critique as a wit of Charles's days, or a lord of the Miscellanies or trading journalist of King William's time, would have brought forth, if he had set his faculties industriously to work upon this poem, everywhere impregnated with original excellence.

So strange indeed are the obliquities of admiration, that they whose opinions are much influenced by authority will often be tempted to think that there are no fixed principles² in human nature for this art to rest upon. I have been honoured by being permitted to peruse in MS. a tract composed between the period of the Revolution and the close of that century. It is the work of an English peer of high accomplishments, its object to form the character and direct the studies of his son. Perhaps nowhere does a more beautiful treatise of the kind exist. The good sense and wisdom of the thoughts, the delicacy of the feelings, and the charm of the style, are, throughout, equally conspicuous. Yet the author, selecting among the poets of his own country those whom he deems most worthy of his son's perusal, particularizes only Lord Rochester, Sir John Denham, and Cowley. Writing about the same time, Shaftesbury, an author at present unjustly depreciated, describes the English Muses as only yet lisping in their cradles.

The arts by which Pope, soon afterwards, contrived to procure to himself a more general and a higher reputation than perhaps any English poet ever attained during his lifetime, are known to the judicious. And as well known is it to them, that the undue exertion of

those arts is the cause why Pope has for some time held a rank in literature, to which if he had not been seduced by an over-love of immediate popularity, and had confided more in his native genius, he never could have descended. He bewitched the nation by his melody, and dazzled it by his polished style, and was himself blinded by his own success. Having wandered from humanity in his Eclogues with boyish inexperience, the praise, which these compositions obtained, tempted him into a belief that Nature was not to be trusted, at least in pastoral poetry. To prove this by example he put his friend Gay upon writing those Eclogues which their author intended to be burlesque. The instigator of the work, and his admirers, could perceive in them nothing but what was ridiculous. Nevertheless, though these poems contain some detestable passages, the effect, as Dr. Johnson well observes, "of reality and truth became conspicuous even when the intention was to show them grovelling and degraded." The Pastorals, ludicrous to such as prided themselves upon their refinement, in spite of those disgusting passages, "became popular, and were read with delight, as just representations of rural manners and occupations."

Something less than sixty years after the publication of the *Paradise Lost* appeared Thomson's "Winter"; which was speedily followed by his other Seasons. It is a work of inspiration; much of it is written from himself, and nobly from himself. How was it received? "It was no sooner read," says one of his contemporary biographers, "than universally admired: those only excepted who had not been used to feel, or to look for anything in poetry, beyond a point of satirical or epigrammatic wit, a smart *antithesis* richly trimmed with rhyme, or the softness of an *elegiac* complaint. To such his manly classical spirit could not readily commend itself; till, after a more attentive perusal, they had got the better of their prejudices, and either acquired or affected a truer taste. A few others stood aloof, merely because they had long before fixed the articles of their poetical creed, and resigned themselves to an absolute despair of ever seeing anything new and original. These were somewhat mortified to find their notions disturbed by the appearance of a poet, who seemed to owe nothing but to nature and his own genius. But, in a short time, the applause became unanimous; every one wondering how

¹ Hughes is express upon this subject: in his dedication of Spenser's Works to Lord Somers, he writes thus. "It was your Lordship's encouraging a beautiful Edition of *Paradise Lost* that first brought that incomparable Poem to be generally known and esteemed."

² This opinion seems actually to have been entertained by Adam Smith, the worst critic, David Hume not excepted, that Scotland, a soil to which this sort of weed seems natural, has produced.

so many pictures, and pictures so familiar should have moved them, but faintly to what they felt, in his descriptions. His digressions, too, the overflowings of a tender benevolent heart, charmed the reader no less; leaving him in doubt, whether he should more admire the poet or love the man."

This case appears to bear strongly against us:—but we must distinguish between wonder and legitimate admiration. The subject of the work is the changes produced in the appearances of nature by the revolution of the year: and, by undertaking to write in verse, Thomson pledged himself to treat his subject as became a poet. Now it is remarkable that, excepting the nocturnal Reverie of Lady Winchelsea, and a passage or two in the Windsor Forest of Pope, the poetry of the period intervening between the publication of the *Paradise Lost* and "The Seasons" does not contain a single new image of external nature; and scarcely presents a familiar one from which it can be inferred that the eye of the poet had been steadily fixed upon his object, much less that his feelings had urged him to work upon it in the spirit of genuine imagination. To what a low state knowledge of the most obvious and important phenomena had sunk, is evident from the style in which Dryden has executed a description of night in one of his Tragedies, and Pope his translation of the celebrated moonlight scene in the *Iliad*. A blind man, in the habit of attending accurately to descriptions casually dropped from the lips of those around him, might easily depict these appearances with more truth. Dryden's lines are vague, bombastic, and senseless; those of Pope, though he had Homer to guide him, are throughout false and contradictory. The verses of Dryden, once highly celebrated, are forgotten; those of Pope still retain their hold upon public estimation,—nay, there is not a passage of descriptive poetry

which at this day finds so many and such ardent admirers. Strange to think of an enthusiast, as may have been the case with thousands, reciting those verses under the cope of a moonlight sky, without having his raptures in the least disturbed by a suspicion of their absurdity!—If these two distinguished writers could habitually think that the visible universe was of so little consequence to a poet, that it was scarcely necessary for him to cast his eyes upon it, we may be assured that those passages of the elder poets which faithfully and poetically describe the phenomena of nature, were not at that time held in much estimation, and that there was little accurate attention paid to those appearances.

Wonder is the natural product of Ignorance; and as the soil was in such good condition at the time of the publication of "The Seasons," the crop was doubtless abundant. Neither individuals nor nations become corrupt all at once, nor are they enlightened in a moment. Thomson was an inspired poet, but he could not work miracles; in cases where the art of seeing had in some degree been learned, the teacher would further the proficiency of his pupils, but he could do little more; though so far does vanity assist men in acts of self-deception, that many would often fancy they recognized a likeness when they knew nothing of the original. Having shown that much of what his biographer deemed genuine admiration must in fact have been blind wonderment—how is the rest to be accounted for?—Thomson was fortunate in the very title of his poem, which seemed to bring it home to the prepared sympathies of every one: in the next place, notwithstanding his high powers, he writes a vicious style; and his false ornaments are exactly of that kind which would be most likely to strike the undiscerning. He likewise abounds with sentimental common-places, that, from the manner in which they were brought forward, bore an imposing air of novelty. In any well-used copy of "The Seasons" the book generally opens of itself with the rhapsody on love, or with one of the stories (perhaps Damon and Musidora); these also are prominent in our collections of extracts, and are the parts of his work, which, after all, were probably most efficient in first recommending the author to general notice. Pope, repaying praises which he had received, and wishing to extol him to the highest, only

¹ *CORTES alone in a night-gown.*
All things are hush'd as Nature's self lay dead;
The mountains seem to nod their drowsy head.
The little Birds in dreams their songs repeat,
And sleeping Flowers beneath the Night-dew sweat:
Even Lust and Envy sleep; yet Love denies
Rest to my soul, and slumber to my eyes.
DRYDEN'S Indian Emperor.

styles him "an elegant and philosophical poet;" nor are we able to collect any unquestionable proofs that the true characteristics of Thomson's genius as an imaginative poet¹ were perceived, till the elder Warton, almost forty years after the publication of "The Seasons," pointed them out by a note in his *Essay on the Life and Writings of Pope*. In "The Castle of Indolence" (of which Gray speaks so coldly) these characteristics were almost as conspicuously displayed, and in verse more harmonious, and diction more pure. Yet that fine poem was neglected on its appearance, and it at this day the delight only of a few!

When Thomson died, Collins breathed forth his regrets in an elegiac poem, in which he pronounces a poetical curse upon him who should regard with insensibility the place where the poet's remains were deposited. The poems of the mourner himself have now passed through innumerable editions, and are universally known; but if, when Collins died, the same kind of imprecation had been pronounced by a surviving admirer, small is the number whom it would not have comprehended. The notice which his poems attained during his lifetime was so small, and of course the sale so insignificant, that not long before his death he deemed it right to repay to the bookseller the sum which he had advanced for them, and threw the edition into the fire.

Next in importance to "The Seasons" of Thomson, though at considerable distance from that work in order of time, come the *Reliques of Ancient English Poetry*; collected, new-modelled, and in many instances (if such a contradiction in terms may be used) composed by the editor, Dr. Percy. This work did not steal silently into the world, as is evident from the number of legendary tales, that appeared not long after its publication; and had been modelled, as the authors persuaded themselves, after the old ballad. The compilation was however ill-suited to the then existing taste of city society; and Dr. Johnson, 'mid the little senate to which he gave laws, was

not sparing in his exertions to make it an object of contempt. The critic triumphed, the legendary imitators were deservedly disregarded, and, as undeservedly, their ill-imitated models sank, in this country, into temporary neglect; while Bürger, and other able writers of Germany, were translating, or imitating these *Reliques* and composing, with the aid of inspiration! thence derived, poems which are the delight of the German nation. Dr. Percy was so abashed by the ridicule flung upon his labours from the ignorance and insensibility of the persons with whom he lived, that, though while he was writing under a mask he had not wanted resolution to follow his genius into the regions of true simplicity and genuine pathos (as is evinced by the exquisite ballad of Sir Cauline and by many other pieces), yet when he appeared in his own person and character as a poetical writer, he adopted, as in the tale of the Hermit of Warkworth, a diction scarcely in any one of its features distinguishable from the vague, the glossy, and unfeeling language of his day. I mention this remarkable fact with regret, esteeming the genius of Dr. Percy in this kind of writing superior to that of any other man by whom in modern times it has been cultivated. That even Bürger (to whom Klopstock gave, in my hearing, a commendation which he denied to Goethe and Schiller, pronouncing him to be a genuine poet, and one of the few among the Germans whose works would last) had not the fine sensibility of Percy. might be shown from many passages, in which he has deserted his original only to go astray. For example,

Now daye was gone, and night was come,
And all were fast asleepe,
All save the Lady Emelſe;
Who sat in her bowre to weepe:

¹ Shenstone, in his "Schoolmistress," gives a still more remarkable instance of this timidity. On its first appearance (see D'Israeli's 2nd Series of the *Curiosities of Literature*), the poem was accompanied with an absurd prose commentary, showing, as indeed some incongruous expressions in the text imply, that the whole was intended for burlesque. In subsequent editions, the commentary was dropped, and the People have since continued to read in seriousness, doing for the author what he had not courage openly to venture upon for himself.

¹ Since these observations upon Thomson were written, I have perused the second edition of his "Seasons," and find that even *that* does not contain the most striking passages which Warton points out for admiration; these, with other improvements, throughout the whole work, must have been added at a later period.

And soone she heard her true Love's voice
Low whispering at the walle,
Awake, awake, my dear Ladye,
'Tis I thy true-love call."

Which is thus tricked out and dilated:

Als nun die Nacht Gebirg' und Thal
Vermummt in Rabensgatten,
Und Hochburgs Lampen überall
Schon ausgedimmert hatten,
Und alles tief entschlafen war;
Doch nur das Fräulein immerdar,
Voll Fieberangst, noch wachte,
Und seinen Ritter dachte:
Da horch! Ein süsser Liebeston
Kam leis' empör geflogen.
"Ho, Trudchen, ho! Da bin ich schon!
Frisch auf! Mich angezogen?"

But from humble ballads we must ascend to heroics.

All hail, Macpherson! Hail to thee, Sir of Ossian! The Phantom was begotten by the snug embrace of an impudent Highlander upon a cloud of tradition—it travelled southward, where it was greeted with acclamation, and the thin Consistence took its course through Europe, upon the breath of popular applause. The editor of the *Reliques* had indirectly preferred a claim to the praise of invention, by not concealing that his supplementary labours were considerable! How selfish his conduct, contrasted with that of the disinterested Gael, who, like Lear, gives his kingdom away, and is content to become a pensioner upon his own issue for a beggarly pittance!—Open this far-famed book!—I have done so at random, and the beginning of the "Epic Poem Temora," in eight books, presents itself. "The blue waves of Ulin roll in light. The green hills are covered with day. Trees shake their dusky heads in the breeze. Grey torrents pour their noisy streams. Two green hills with aged oaks surround a narrow plain. The blue course of a stream is there. On its banks stood Cairbar of A'ha. His spear supports the king; the red eyes of his fear are sad. Cormac rises on his soul with all his ghastly wounds." Precious memorandums from the pocket-book of the blind Ossian!

If it be unbecoming, as I acknowledge that for the most part it is, to speak disrespectfully of works that have enjoyed for a length of time a widely-spread reputation, without at the same time producing irrefragable proofs of their unworthiness, let me be forgiven

upon this occasion.—Having had the good fortune to be born and reared in a mountainous country, from my very childhood I have felt the falsehood that pervades the volumes imposed upon the world under the name of Ossian. From what I saw with my own eyes, I knew that the imagery was spurious. In nature every thing is distinct, yet nothing defined into absolute independent singleness. In Macpherson's work, it is exactly the reverse; every thing (that is not stolen) is in this manner defined, insulated, dislocated, deadened,—yet nothing distinct. It will always be so when words are substituted for things. To say that the characters never could exist, that the manners are impossible, and that a dream has more substance than the whole state of society, as there depicted, is doing nothing more than pronouncing a censure which Macpherson defied; when, with the steep of Morven before his eyes, he could talk so familiarly of his Carborne heroes;—of Morven, which, if one may judge from its appearance at the distance of a few miles, contains scarcely an acre of ground sufficiently accommodating for a sledge to be trailed along its surface.—Mr. Malcolm Laing has ably shown that the diction of this pretended translation is a motley assemblage from all quarters; but he is so fond of making out parallel passages as to call poor Macpherson to account for his "*ands*" and his "*buis*!" and he has weakened his argument by conducting it as if he thought that every striking resemblance was a *conscious* plagiarism. It is enough that the coincidences are too remarkable for its being probable or possible that they could arise in different minds without communication between them. Now as the translators of the Bible, and Shakespeare, Milton, and Pope, could not be indebted to Macpherson, it follows that he must have owed his fine feathers to them; unless we are prepared gravely to assert, with Madame de Staël, that many of the characteristic beauties of our most celebrated English poets are derived from the ancient Fingallian; in which case the modern translator would have been but giving back to Ossian his own.—It is consistent that Lucien Buonaparte, who could censure Milton for having surrounded Satan in the infernal regions with courtly and regal splendour, should pronounce the modern Ossian to be the glory of Scotland;—a country that has produced a Dunbar, a Buchanan, a Thomson and a Burns! These opinions are

of ill omen for the Epic ambition of him who has given them to the world.

Yet, much as those pretended treasures of antiquity have been admired, they have been wholly unimportant upon the literature of the Country. No succeeding writer appears to have caught from them a ray of inspiration; no author, in the least distinguished, has ventured formally to imitate them—except the boy, Chatterton, on their first appearance. He had perceived, from the successful trials which he himself had made in literary forgery, how few critics were able to distinguish between a real ancient medal and a counterfeit of modern manufacture; and he set himself to the work of filling a magazine with *Saxon Poems*,—counterparts of those of Ossian, as like his as one of his misty stars is to another. This incapability to amalgamate with the literature of the Island is, in my estimation, a decisive proof that the book is essentially unnatural; nor should I require any other to demonstrate it to be a forgery audacious as worthless.—Contrast, in this respect, the effect of Macpherson's publication with the *Reliques* of Percy, so unassuming, so modest in their pretensions!—I have already stated how much Germany is indebted to this latter work; and for our own country, its poetry has been absolutely redeemed by it. I do not think that there is an able writer in verse of the present day who would not be proud to acknowledge his obligations to the *Reliques*; I know that it is so with my friends; and, for myself, I am happy in this occasion to make a public avowal of my own.

Dr. Johnson, more fortunate in his contempt of the labours of Macpherson than those of his modest friend, was solicited not long after to furnish prefaces biographical and critical for the works of some of the most eminent English poets. The booksellers took upon themselves to make the collection; they referred probably to the most popular miscellanies, and, unquestionably, to their books of accounts; and decided upon the claim of authors to be admitted into a body of the most eminent, from the familiarity of their names with the readers of that day, and by the profits, which, from the sale of his works, each had brought and was bringing to the Trade. The editor was allowed a limited exercise of discretion, and the authors whom he recommended are scarcely to be mentioned without a smile. We open the volume of *Prefatory Lives*, and to our astonish-

ment the first name we find is that of Cowley!—What is become of the morning-star of English Poetry? Where is the bright Elizabethan constellation? Or, if names be more acceptable than images, where is the ever-to-be-honoured Chaucer? Where is Spenser? Where Sidney? And, lastly, where he, whose rights as a poet, contradistinguished from those which he is universally allowed to possess as a dramatist, we have vindicated,—where Shakespeare?—These, and a multitude of others not unworthy to be placed near them, their contemporaries and successors, we have not. But in their stead, we have (could better be expected when precedence was to be settled by an abstract of reputation at any given period made, as in this case before us?) Roscommon, and Steppay, and Phillips, and Walsh, and Smith, and Duke, and King, and Spratt—Halifax, Granville, Sheffield, Congreve, Broome, and other reputed magnates—metrical writers utterly worthless and useless; except for occasions like the present, when their productions are referred to as evidence what a small quantity of brain is necessary to procure a considerable stock of admiration, provided the aspirant will accommodate himself to the likings and fashions of his day.

As I do not mean to bring down this retrospect to our own times, it may with propriety be closed at the era of this distinguished event. From the literature of other ages and countries, proofs equally cogent might have been adduced, that the opinions announced in the former part of this essay are founded upon truth. It was not an agreeable office, nor a prudent undertaking, to declare them; but their importance seemed to render it a duty. It may still be asked, where lies the particular relation of what has been said to these volumes?—The question will be easily answered by the discerning reader who is old enough to remember the taste that prevailed when some of these poems were first published, seventeen years ago; who has also observed to what degree the poetry of this Island has since that period been coloured by them; and who is further aware of the unremitting hostility with which, upon some principle or other, they have each and all been opposed. A sketch of my own notion of the constitution of fame has been given; and, as far as concerns myself, I have cause to be satisfied. The love, the admiration, the indifference, the slight, the aversion, and even the contempt, with which these

poems have been received, knowing, as I do, the source within my own mind, from which they have proceeded, and the labour and pains, which, when labour and pains appeared needful, have been bestowed upon them, must all, if I think consistently, be received as pledges and tokens, bearing the same general impressions though widely different in value;—they are all proofs that for the present time I have not laboured in vain; and afford assurances, more or less authentic, that the products of my industry will endure.

If there be one conclusion more forcibly pressed upon us than another by the review which has been given of the fortunes and fate of poetical works, it is this,—that every author, as far as he is great and at the same time original, has had the task of *creating* the taste by which he is to be enjoyed: as has it been, so will it continue to be. This remark was long since made to me by the philosophical friend for the separation of whose poems from my own I have previously expressed my regret. The predecessors of an original genius of a high order will have smoothed the way for all that he has in common with them;—and much he will have in common: but, for what is peculiarly his own, he will be called upon to clear and often to shape his own road:—he will be in the condition of Hannibal among the Alps.

And where lies the real difficulty of creating that taste by which a truly original poet is to be relished? Is it in breaking the bonds of custom, in overcoming the prejudices of false refinement, and displacing the aversions of inexperience? Or, if he labour for an object which here and elsewhere I have proposed to myself, does it consist in divesting the reader of the pride that induces him to dwell upon those points wherein men differ from each other, to the exclusion of those in which all men are alike, or the same; and in making him ashamed of the vanity that renders him insensible of the appropriate excellence which civil arrangements, less unjust than might appear, and Nature illimitable in her bounty, have conferred on men who may stand below him in the scale of society? Finally, does it lie in establishing that dominion over the spirits of readers by which they are to be humbled and humanized, in order that they may be purified and exalted?

If these ends are to be attained by the mere communication of *knowledge*, it does not lie here.—TASTE, I would re-

mind the reader, like IMAGINATION, is a word which has been forced to extend its services far beyond the point to which philosophy would have confined them. It is a metaphor, taken from a *passive* sense of the human body, and transferred to things which are in their essence *not* passive,—to intellectual *acts* and *operations*. The word, Imagination, has been overstrained, from impulses honourable to mankind, to meet the demands of the faculty which is perhaps the noblest of our nature. In the instance of Taste, the process has been reversed; and from the prevalence of dispositions at once injurious and discreditable, being no other than that selfishness which is the child of apathy,—which, as Nations decline in productive and creative power, makes them value themselves upon a presumed refinement of judging. Poverty of language is the primary cause of the use which we make of the word, Imagination; but the word, Taste, has been stretched to the sense which it bears in modern Europe by habits of self-conceit, inducing that inversion in the order of things whereby a passive faculty is made paramount among the faculties conversant with the fine arts. Proportion and congruity, the requisite knowledge being supposed, are subjects upon which taste may be trusted; it is competent to this office;—for in its intercourse with these the mind is *passive*, and is affected painfully or pleasurable as by an instinct. But the profound and the exquisite in feeling, the lofty and universal in thought and imagination; or, in ordinary language, the pathetic and the sublime;—are neither of them, accurately speaking, objects of a faculty which could ever without a sinking in the spirit of Nations have been designated by the metaphor—Taste. And why? Because without the exertion of a co-operating *power* in the mind of the Reader, there can be no adequate sympathy with either of these emotions: without this auxiliary impulse, elevated or profound passion cannot exist.

Passion, it must be observed, is derived from a word which signifies *suffering*; but the connexion which suffering has with effort, with exertion, and *action*, is immediate and inseparable. How strikingly is this property of human nature exhibited by the fact that, in popular language, to be in a passion, is to be angry!—But,

"Anger in hasty words or blows
Itself discharges on its foes."

To be moved, then, by a passion, is to be excited, often to external, and always to internal, effort; whether for the continuance and strengthening of the passion, or for its suppression, accordingly as the course which it takes may be painful or pleasurable. If the latter, the soul must contribute to its support, or it never becomes vivid,—and soon languishes, and dies. And this brings us to the point. If every great poet with whose writings men are familiar, in the highest exercise of his genius, before he can be thoroughly enjoyed, has to call forth and to communicate *power*, this service, in a still greater degree, falls upon an original writer, at his first appearance in the world.—Of genius the only proof is, the act of doing well what is worthy to be done, and what was never done before. Of genius, in the fine arts, the only infallible sign is the widening the sphere of human sensibility, for the delight, honour, and benefit of human nature. Genius is the introduction of a new element into the intellectual universe: or, if that be not allowed, it is the application of powers to objects on which they had not before been exercised, or the employment of them in such a manner as to produce effects hitherto unknown. What is all this but an advance, or a conquest, made by the soul of the poet? Is it to be supposed that the reader can make progress of this kind, like an Indian prince or general—stretched on his palanquin, and borne by his slaves? No; he is invigorated and inspirited by his leader, in order that he may exert himself; for he cannot proceed in quiescence, he cannot be carried like a dead weight. Therefore to create taste is to call forth and bestow power, of which knowledge is the effect; and *there* lies the true difficulty.

As the pathetic participates of an *animal* sensation, it might seem—that, if the springs of this emotion were genuine, all men, possessed of competent knowledge of the facts and circumstances, would be instantaneously affected. And, doubtless, in the works of every true poet will be found passages of that species of excellence, which is proved by effects immediate and universal. But there are emotions of the pathetic that are simple and direct, and others—that are complex and revolutionary; some—to which the heart yields with gentleness; others—against which it struggles with pride; these varieties are infinite as the combinations of circumstance and the consti-

tutions of character. Remember, also, that the medium through which, in poetry, the heart is to be affected—is language; a thing subject to endless fluctuations and arbitrary associations. The genius of the poet melts these down for his purpose: but they retain their shape and quality to him who is not capable of exerting, within his own mind, a corresponding energy. There is also a meditative, as well as a human, pathos; an enthusiastic, as well as an ordinary, sorrow; a sadness that has its seat in the depths of reason, to which the mind cannot sink gently of itself—but to which it must descend by treading the steps of thought. And for the sublime,—if we consider what are the cares that occupy the passing day, and how remote is the practice and the course of life from the sources of sublimity in the soul of Man, can it be wondered that there is little existing preparation for a poet charged with a new mission to extend its kingdom, and to augment and spread its enjoyments?

Away, then, with the senseless iteration of the word *popular*, applied to new works in poetry, as if there were no test of excellence in this first of the fine arts but that all men should run after its productions, as if urged by an appetite, or constrained by a spell!—The qualities of writing best fitted for eager reception are either such as startle the world into attention by their audacity and extravagance; or they are chiefly of a superficial kind lying upon the surfaces of manners; or arising out of a selection and arrangement of incidents, by which the mind is kept upon the stretch of curiosity and the fancy amused without the trouble of thought. But in everything which is to send the soul into herself, to be admonished of her weakness, or to be made conscious of her power:—wherever life and nature are described as operated upon by the creative or abstracting virtue of the imagination; wherever the instinctive wisdom of antiquity and her heroic passions uniting, in the heart of the poet, with the meditative wisdom of later ages, have produced that accord of sublimated humanity which is at once a history of the remote past and a prophetic enunciation of the remotest future, *there*, the poet must reconcile himself for a season to few and scattered hearers.—Grand thoughts (and Shakespeare must often have sighed over this truth), as they are most naturally and most fitly conceived in solitude, so can they not be brought forth in the

midst of plaudits, without some violation of their sanctity. Go to a silent exhibition of the productions of the Sister Art, and be convinced that the qualities which dazzle at first sight, and kindle the admiration of the multitude, are essentially different from those by which permanent influence is secured. Let us not shrink from following up these principles as far as they will carry us, and conclude with observing—that there never has been a period, and perhaps never will be, in which vicious poetry, of some kind or other, has not excited more zealous admiration, and been far more generally read, than good; but this advantage attends the good, that the *individual*, as well as the species, survives from age to age; whereas, of the depraved, though the species be immortal, the individual quickly *perishes*; the object of present admiration vanishes, being supplanted by some other as easily produced; which, though no better, brings with it at least the irritation of novelty,—with adaptation, more or less skilful, to the changing humours of the majority of those who are most at leisure to regard poetical works when they first solicit their attention.

Is it the result of the whole, that, in the opinion of the writer, the judgment of the People is not to be respected? The thought is most injurious; and, could the charge be brought against him, he would repel it with indignation. The People have already been justified, and their eulogium pronounced by implication when it was said, above—that, of good poetry, the *individual*, as well as the species, *survives*. And how does it survive but through the People? What preserves it but their intellect and their wisdom?

“—Past and future, are the wings
On whose support, harmoniously con-
joined,

Moves the great Spirit of human know-
ledge——” MS.

The voice that issues from this Spirit, is that *Vox Populi* which the Deity inspires. Foolish must he be who can mistake for this a local acclamation, or a transitory outcry—transitory though it be for years, local though from a Nation. Still more lamentable is his error who can believe that there is any thing of divine infallibility in the clamour of that small though loud portion of the community, ever governed by factitious influence, which, under the name of the Public, passes itself, upon the unthinking, for the People. Towards the Public, the writer hopes that he feels as much deference as it is entitled to: but to the People, philosophically characterized, and to the embodied spirit of their knowledge, so far as it exists and moves, at the present, faithfully supported by its two wings, the past and the future, his devout respect, his reverence, is due. He offers it willingly and readily; and, this done, takes leave of his readers, by assuring them—that, if he were not persuaded that the contents of these volumes, and the work to which they are subsidiary, evince something of the “Vision and the Faculty divine”; and that, both in words and things, they will operate in their degree, to extend the domain of sensibility for the delight, the honour, and the benefit of human nature, notwithstanding the many happy hours which he has employed in their composition, and the manifold comforts and enjoyments they have procured to him, he would not, if a wish could do it, save them from immediate destruction;—from becoming at this moment, to the world, as a thing that had never been.

1815.

DEDICATION PREFIXED TO THE EDITION OF 1815

TO

SIR GEORGE HOWLAND BEAUMONT, BART.

MY DEAR SIR GEORGE, *

Accept my thanks for the permission given me to dedicate these volumes to you. In addition to a lively pleasure derived from general considerations, I

feel a particular satisfaction; for, by inscribing these poems with your name, I seem to myself in some degree to repay, by an appropriate honour, the great obligation which I owe to one part of

the collection—as having been the means of first making us personally known to each other. Upon much of the remainder, also, you have a peculiar claim,—for some of the best pieces were composed under the shade of your own groves, upon the classic ground of Coleorton; where I was animated by the recollection of those illustrious Poets of your name and family, who were borne in that neighbourhood; and, we may be assured, did not wander with indifference by the dashing stream of Grace Dieu, and among the rocks that diversify the forest of Charnwood.—Nor is there any one to whom such parts of this collection as have been inspired or coloured by the beautiful Country from which I now address you, could be presented with more propriety than to yourself—to whom it has suggested

so many admirable pictures. Early in life, the sublimity and beauty of this region excited your admiration; and I knew that you are bound to it in mind by a still strengthening attachment.

Wishing and hoping that this Work, with the embellishments it has received from your pencil,¹ may survive as a lasting memorial of a friendship which I reckon among the blessings of my life,

I have the honour to be,

My dear Sir George,

Yours most affectionately and

faithfully,

WILLIAM WORDSWORTH.

RYDAL MOUNT, WESTMORELAND,

February 1, 1815.

¹ The state of the plates has, for some time, not allowed them to be repeated.

PREFACE TO THE EDITION OF 1815

THE powers requisite for the production of poetry are: first, those of Observation and Description—i.e., the ability to observe with accuracy things as they are in themselves, and with fidelity to describe them, unmodified by any passion or feeling existing in the mind of the describer: whether the things depicted be actually present to the senses, or have a place only in the memory. This power, though indispensable to a poet, is one which he employs only in submission to necessity, and never for a continuance of time: as its exercise supposes all the higher qualities of the mind to be passive, and in a state of subjection to external objects, much in the same way as a translator or engraver ought to be to his original. 2ndly, Sensibility,—which, the more exquisite it is, the wider will be the range of a poet's perceptions; and the more will he be incited to observe objects, both as they exist in themselves and as re-acted upon by his own mind. (The distinction between poetic and human sensibility has been marked in the character of the poet delineated in the original preface.) 3rdly, Reflection,—which makes the poet acquainted with the value of actions, images, thoughts and feelings; and assists the sensibility in perceiving their connexion with each other. 4thly, Imagination and Fancy,—to modify, to create, and to associate. 5thly, Invention,—by which characters

are composed out of materials supplied by observation; whether of the Poet's own heart and mind, or of external life and nature; and such incidents and situations produced as are most impressive to the imagination, and most fitted to do justice to the characters, sentiments, and passions which the poet undertakes to illustrate. And, lastly, Judgment—to decide how and where, and in what degree, each of these faculties ought to be exerted; so that the less shall not be sacrificed to the greater; nor the greater, slighting the less, arrogate, to its own injury, more than its due. By judgment, also, is determined what are the laws and appropriate graces of every species of composition.¹

The materials of poetry, by these powers collected and produced, are cast, by means of various moulds, into divers forms. The moulds may be enumerated, and the forms specified, in the following order. 1st, The Narrative,—including the Epopœia, the Historic Poem, the Fable, the Romance, the Mock-heroic, and, if the spirit of Homer will tolerate such neighbourhood, that dear production of our days, the metrical Novel. Of

¹ As sensibility to harmony of numbers, and the power of producing it, are invariably attendants upon the faculties above specified nothing has been said upon those requisites.

this class, the distinguishing mark is, that the Narrator, however liberally his speaking agents be introduced, is himself the source from which every thing primarily flows. Epic Poets, in order that their mode of composition may accord with the elevation of their subject, represent themselves as singing from the inspiration of the Muse "*Arma virumque cano*"; but this is a fiction, in modern times, of slight value: the *Iliad* or the *Paradise Lost* would gain little in our estimation by being chanted. The other poets who belong to this class are commonly content to tell their tale;—so that of the whole it may be affirmed that they neither require nor reject the accompaniment of music.

2ndly, The Dramatic,—consisting of Tragedy, Historic Drama, Comedy, and Masque, in which the poet does not appear at all in his own person, and where the whole action is carried on by speech and dialogue of the agents; music being admitted only incidentally and rarely. The Opera may be placed here, inasmuch as it proceeds by dialogue; though depending, to the degree that it does, upon music, it has a strong claim to be ranked with the lyrical. The characteristic and impassioned Epistle, of which Ovid and Pope have given examples, considered as a species of monodrama, may, without impropriety, be placed in this class.

3rdly, The Lyrical,—containing the Hymn, the Ode, the Elegy, the Song, and the Ballad; in all which, for the production of their full effect, an accompaniment of music is indispensable.

4thly, The Idyllium,—descriptive chiefly either of the processes and appearances of external nature, as "The Seasons" of Thomson; or of characters, manners, and scintillations, as are Shensstone's "Schoolmistress," "The Cotter's Saturday Night" of Burns, "The Two Dogs" of the same author; or of these in conjunction with the appearances of Nature, as most of the pieces of Theocritus, the "Allegro" and "Penseroso" of Milton, Beattie's "Minstrel," Goldsmith's "Deserted Village." The Epitaph, the Inscription, the Sonnet, most of the Epistles of poets writing in their own persons, and all locodescriptive poetry, belong to this class.

5thly, Didactic,—the principal object of which is direct instruction; as the Poem of Lucretius, the Georgics of Virgil, the "Fleece" of Dyer, Mason's "English Garden," etc.

And, lastly, philosophical Satire, like

that of Horace and Juvenal; personal and occasional Satire rarely comprehending sufficient of the general in the individual to be dignified with the name of poetry.

Out of the three last has been constructed a composite order, of which Young's "Night Thoughts," and Cowper's "Task," are excellent examples.

It is deducible from the above, that poems, apparently miscellaneous, may, with propriety be arranged either with reference to the powers of mind predominant in the production of them; or to the mould in which they are cast; or, lastly, to the subjects to which they relate. From each of these considerations, the following poems have been divided into classes; which, that the work may more obviously correspond with the course of human life, and for the sake of exhibiting in it the three requisites of a legitimate whole, a beginning, a middle and an end, have been also arranged, as far as it was possible, according to an order of time, commencing with Childhood, and terminating with Old Age, Death, and Immortality. My guiding wish was, that the small pieces of which these volumes consist, thus discriminated, might be regarded under a two-fold view; as composing an entire work within themselves, and as adjuncts to the philosophical poem, "The Recluse." This arrangement has long presented itself habitually to my own mind. Nevertheless, I should have preferred to scatter the contents of these volumes at random, if I had been persuaded that, by the plan adopted, anything material would be taken from the natural effect of the pieces, individually, on the mind of the unreflecting reader. I trust there is a sufficient variety in each class to prevent this; while, for him who reads with reflection, the arrangement will serve as a commentary unostentatiously directing his attention to my purposes, both particular and general. But, as I wish to guard against the possibility of misleading by this classification, it is proper first to remind the reader, that certain poems are placed according to the powers of mind, in the author's conception, predominant in the production of them; predominant, which implies the exertion of other faculties in less degree. Where there is more imagination than fancy in a poem, it is placed under the head of imagination, and *vice versa*. Both the above classes might without impropriety have been enlarged from that consisting of "Poems founded of the Affections";

as might this latter from those, and from the class "proceeding from Sentiment and Reflection." The most striking characteristics of each piece, mutual illustration, variety, and proportion, have governed me throughout.

None of the other classes, except those of Fancy and Imagination, require any particular notice. But a remark of general application may be made. All poets, except the dramatic, have been, in the practice of feigning that their works were composed to the music of the harp or lyre; with what degree of affectation this has been done in modern times, I leave to the judicious to determine. For my own part, I have not been disposed to violate probability so far, or to make such a large demand upon the reader's charity. Some of these pieces are essentially lyrical; and, therefore, cannot have their due force without a supposed musical accompaniment; but, in much the greatest part, as a substitute for the classic lyre or romantic harp, I require nothing more than an animated or impassioned recitation, adapted to the subject. Poems, however, humble in their kind, if they be good in that kind, cannot read themselves; the law of long syllable and short must not be so inflexible,—the letter of metre must not be so impassive to the spirit of versification,—as to deprive the reader of all voluntary power to modulate, in subordination to the sense, the music of the poem;—in the same manner as his mind is left at liberty, and even summoned, to act upon its thoughts and images. But, though the accompaniment of a musical instrument be frequently dispensed with, the true poet does not therefore abandon his privilege distinct from that of the mere proseman:

"He murmurs near the running brooks
A music sweeter than their own."

Let us come now to the consideration of the words Fancy and Imagination, as employed in the classification of the following poems. "A man," says an intelligent author, "has imagination in proportion as he can distinctly copy in idea the impressions of sense: it is the faculty which *images* within the mind the phenomena of sensation. A man has fancy in proportion as he can call up, connect, or associate, at pleasure, those internal images (*φαντάζειν* is to cause to appear) so as to complete ideal representations of absent objects. Imagination is the power of depicting, and fancy of evoking and combining. The

imagination is formed by patient observation; the fancy by a voluntary activity in shifting the scenery of the mind. The more accurate the imagination, the more safely may a painter, or a poet, undertake a delineation, or a description, without the presence of the objects to be characterized. The more versatile the fancy, the more original and striking will be the decorations produced." *British Synonyms discriminated*, by W. Taylor.

Is not this as if a man should undertake to supply an account of a building, and be so intent upon what he had discovered of the foundation, as to conclude his task without once looking up at the superstructure? Here, as in other instances throughout the volume, the judicious author's mind is estranged by Etymology; he takes up the original word as his guide and escort, and too often does not perceive how soon he becomes its prisoner, without liberty to tread in any path but that to which it confines him. It is not easy to find out how imagination, thus explained, differs from distinct remembrance of images; or fancy from quick and vivid recollection of them: each is nothing more than a mode of memory. If the two words bear the above meaning, and no other, what term is left to designate that faculty of which the poet is "all compact"; he whose eye glances from earth to heaven, whose spiritual attributes body forth what his pen is prompt in turning to shape; or what is left to characterize Fancy, as insinuating herself into the heart of objects with creative activity?—Imagination, in the sense of the word as giving title to a class of the following poems, has no reference to images that are merely a faithful copy, existing in the mind, of absent external objects; but is a word of higher import, denoting operations of the mind upon those objects, and processes of creation or of composition, governed by certain fixed laws. I proceed to illustrate my meaning by instances. A parrot *hangs* from the wires of his cage by his beak or by his claws; or a monkey, from the bough of a tree by his paws or his tail. Each creature does so literally and actually. In the first *Eclogue* of Virgil, the shepherd, thinking of the time when he is to take leave of his farm, thus addresses his goats:—

"Non ego vos posthac viridi projectus in
antro
Dumosa pendere procul de rupe videbo."
—"half way down
Hangs one who gathers samphire,"

is the well-known expression of Shakespeare, delineating an ordinary image upon the cliffs of Dover. In these two instances is a slight exertion of the faculty which I denominate imagination, in the use of one word, neither the goats nor the samphire-gatherer do literally hang, as does the parrot or the monkey; but, presenting to the senses something of such an appearance, the mind in its activity, for its own gratification, contemplates them as hanging.

"As when far off at sea a fleet descried
Hangs in the clouds, by equinoctial
winds

Close sailing from Bengala, or the isles
Of Ternate or Tidore, whence mer-
chants bring

Their spicy drugs; they on the trading
flood

Through the wide Ebbiopian to the
Cape

Ply, stemmin' nightly toward the Pole;
so seemed,

Far off the flying Fleet."

Here is the full strength of the imagination involved in the word *hangs*, and exerted upon the whole image: First, the fleet, an aggregate of many ships, is represented as one mighty person, whose track, we know and feel, is upon the waters; but, taking advantage of its appearance to the senses, the poet dares to represent it as *hanging in the clouds*, both for the gratification of the mind in contemplating the image itself, and in reference to the motion and appearance of the sublime objects to which it is compared.

From impressions of sight we will pass to those of sound; which, as they must necessarily be of a less definite character, shall be selected from these volumes:

"Over his own sweet voice the Stock-
dove broods;"

of the same bird,

"His voice was *buried* among trees
Yet to be come at by the breeze;"

"O, Cuckoo! shall I call thee, *Bird*
Or but a wandering Voice?"

The stock-dove is said to *coo*, a sound well imitating the note of the bird; but, by the intervention of the metaphor *broods*, the affections are called in by the imagination to assist in marking the manner in which the bird reiterates and prolongs her soft note, as if herself delighting to listen to it, and participating

of a still and quiet satisfaction, like that which may be supposed inseparable from the continuous process of incubation.

"His voice was buried among trees," a metaphor expressing the love of *seclusion* by which this Bird is marked; and characterizing its note as not partaking of the shrill and the piercing, and therefore more easily deadened by the intervening shade; yet a note so peculiar and withal so pleasing, that the breeze, gifted with that love of the sound which the poet feels, penetrates the shades in which it is entombed, and conveys it to the ear of the listener.

"Shall I call thee Bird,
Or but a wandering Voice?"

This concise interrogation characterizes the seeming ubiquity of the voice of the cuckoo, and dispossesses the creature almost of a corporeal existence; the Imagination being tempted to this exertion of her power by a consciousness in the memory that the cuckoo is almost perpetually heard throughout the season of spring, but seldom becomes an object of sight.

Thus far of images independent of each other, and immediately endowed by the mind with properties that do not inhere in them, upon an incitement from properties and qualities the existence of which is inherent and obvious. These processes of imagination are carried on either by conferring additional properties upon an object, or abstracting from it some of those which it actually possesses, and thus enabling it to re-act upon the mind which hath performed the process, like a new existence.

I pass from the Imagination acting upon an individual image to a consideration of the same faculty employed upon images in a conjunction by which they modify each other. The reader has already had a fine instance before him in the passage quoted from Virgil, where the apparently perilous situation of the goat, hanging upon the shaggy precipice, is contrasted with that of the shepherd contemplating it from the seclusion of the cavern in which he lies stretched at ease and in security. Take these images separately, and how unaffecting the picture compared with that produced by their being thus connected with, and opposed to, each other!

"As a huge stone is sometimes seen to lie
Couched on the bald top of an eminence,
Wonder to all who do the same espy
By what means it could thither come,
and whence,

So that it seems a thing endued with
sense,
Like a sea-beast crawled forth, which
on a shelf
Of rock or sand reposes, there to sun
himself,
Such seemed this Man; not all alive or
dead
Nor all asleep, in his extreme old age.
Motionless as a cloud the old Man
stood,
That heareth not the loud winds when
they call,
And moveth altogether if it move at
all."

In these images, the conferring, the abstracting, and the modifying powers of the Imagination, immediately and mediately acting, are all brought into conjunction. The stone is endowed with something of the power of life to approximate it to the sea-beast; and the sea-beast stripped of some of its vital qualities to assimilate it to the stone; which intermediate image is thus treated for the purpose of bringing the original image, that of the stone, to a nearer resemblance to the figure and condition of the aged man; who is divested of so much of the indications of life and motion as to bring him to the point where the two objects unite and coalesce in just comparison. After what has been said, the image of the cloud need not be commented upon.

Thus far of an endowing or modifying power; but the Imagination also shapes and creates; and how? By innumerable processes; and in none does it more delight than in that of consolidating numbers into unity, and dissolving and separating unity into number,—iterations proceeding from, and governed by, a sublime consciousness of the soul in her own mighty and almost divine powers. Recur to the passage already cited from Milton. When the compact fleet, as one person, has been introduced "Sailing from Bengala." "They," i.e. the "merchants," representing the fleet resolved into a multitude of ships, "ply" their voyage towards the extremities of the earth: "So" (referring to the word "As" in the commencement) "seemed the flying Fiend"; the image of his person acting to recombine the multitude of ships into one body,—the point from which the comparison set out. "So seemed," and to whom seemed? To the heavenly Muse who dictates the poem, to the eye of the poet's mind, and to that of

the reader, present at one moment in the wide Ethiopian, and the next in the solitudes, then first broken in upon, of the infernal regions!

"Modo mē Thebis, modo ponit Athenis."

Hear again this mighty Poet,—speaking of the Messiah going forth to expel from heaven the rebellious angels,

"Attended by ten thousand thousand Saints

"He onward came: far off his coming shone,"—

the retinue of Saints, and the Person of the Messiah himself, lost almost and merged in the splendour of that indefinite abstraction "His coming!"

As I do not mean here to treat this subject further than to throw some light upon the present volumes, and especially upon one division of them, I shall spare myself and the reader the trouble of considering the Imagination as it deals with thoughts and sentiments, as it regulates the composition of characters, and determines the course of actions: I will not consider it (more than I have already done by implication) as that power which, in the language of one of my most esteemed friends, "draws all things to one; which makes things animate or inanimate, beings with their attributes, subjects with their accessories take one colour and serve to one effect."¹ The grand store-houses of enthusiastic and meditative Imagination, of poetical, as contradistinguished from human and dramatic Imagination, are the prophetic and lyrical parts of the Holy Scriptures, and the works of Milton; to which I cannot forbear to add those of Spenser. I select these writers in preference to those of ancient Greece and Rome, because the anthropomorphism of the Pagan religion subjected the minds of the greatest poets in those countries too much to the bondage of definite form; from which the Hebrews were preserved by their abhorrence of idolatry. This abhorrence was almost as strong in our great epic poet, both from circumstances of his life, and from the constitution of his mind. However imbued the surface might be with classical literature, he was a Hebrew in soul; and all things tended in him toward the sublime. Spenser, of a gentler nature, maintained his freedom by aid of his allegorical spirit, at one time inciting him to create persons out of abstractions; and, at another, by a

¹ Charles Lamb upon the genius of Hogarth.

superior effort of genius, to give the universality and permanence of abstractions to his human beings, by means of attributes and emblems that belong to the highest moral truths and the purest sensations,—of which his character of *Una* is a glorious example. Of the human and dramatic Imagination the works of Shakespeare are an inexhaustible source.

"I tax not you, ye Elements, with unkindness,
I never gave you kingdoms, call'd you
daughters!"

And if, bearing in mind the many poets distinguished by this prime quality, whose names I omit to mention; yet justified by recollection, of the insults which the ignorant, the incapable, and the presumptuous, have heaped upon these and my other writings, I may be permitted to anticipate the judgment of posterity upon myself, I shall declare (censurable I grant, if the notoriety of the fact above stated does not justify me) that I have given in these unfavourable times, evidence of exertions of this faculty upon its worthiest objects, the external universe, the moral and religious sentiments of Man, his natural affections, and his acquired passions; which have the same ennobling tendency as the productions of men, in this kind, worthy to be holden in undying remembrance.

To the mode in which Fancy has already been characterized as the power of evoking and combining, or as my friend Mr. Coleridge has styled it, "the aggregative and associative power," my objection is only that the definition is too general. To aggregate and to associate, to evoke and to combine, belong as well to the Imagination as to the Fancy; but either the materials evoked and combined are different; or they are brought together under a different law, and for a different purpose. Fancy does not require that the materials which she makes use of should be susceptible of change in their constitution, from her touch; and, where they admit of modification, it is enough for her purpose if it be slight, limited, and evanescent. Directly the reverse of these are the desires and demands of the Imagination. She recoils from everything but the plastic, the pliant, and the indefinite. She leaves it to Fancy to describe Queen Mab as coming,

"In shape no bigger than an agate-stone
On the fore-finger of an alderman."

Having to speak of stature, she does not tell you that her gigantic Angel was tall as Pompey's Pillar; much less that he was twelve cubits, or twelve hundred cubits high; or that his dimensions equalled those of Teneriffe or Atlas;—because these, and if they were a million times as high it would be the same, are bounded: The expression is, "His stature reached the sky!" the illimitable firmament!—When the Imagination frames a comparison, if it does not strike on the first presentation, a sense of the truth of the likeness from the moment it is perceived, grows—and continues to grow—upon the mind; the resemblance depending less upon outline of form and feature, than upon expression and effect; less upon casual and outstanding, than upon inherent and internal, properties; moreover, the images invariably modify each other.—The law under which the processes of Fancy are carried on is as capricious as the accidents of things, and the effects are surprising, playful, ludicrous, amusing, tender, or pathetic, as the objects happen to be oppositely produced or fortunately combined. Fancy depends upon the rapidity and profusion with which she scatters her thoughts and images; trusting that their number, and the felicity with which they are linked together, will make amends for the want of individual value; or she prides herself upon the curious subtlety and the successful elaboration with which she can detect their lurking affinities. If she can win you over to her purpose, and impart to you her feelings, she cares not how unstable or transitory may be her influence, knowing that it will not be out of her power to resume it upon an apt occasion. But the Imagination is conscious of an indestructible dominion;—the Soul may fall away from it, not being able to sustain its grandeur; but, if once felt and acknowledged, by no act of any other faculty of the mind can it be relaxed, impaired, or diminished. Fancy is given to quicken and to beguile the temporal part of our nature, Imagination to incite and to support the eternal. Yet is it not the less true that Fancy, as she is an active, is also, under her own laws and in her own spirit, a creative faculty. In what manner Fancy ambitiously aims at a rivalry with Imagination and Imagination stoops to work with the materials of Fancy, might be illustrated from the compositions of all eloquent writers, whether in prose or verse; and chiefly from those of our own country. Scarcely a page

of the impassioned parts of Bishop Taylor's work can be opened that shall not afford examples.—Referring the reader to those inestimable volumes, I will content myself with placing a conceit (ascribed to Lord. Chesterfield) in contrast with a passage from the *Paradise Lost* :—

"The dews of the evening most carefully shewn,
They are the tears of the sky for the loss of the sun."

After the transgression of Adam, Milton, with other appearances of sympathizing Nature, thus marks the immediate consequence.

"Sky lowered, and, muttering thunder,
some sad drops
Wept at completion of the mortal sin."

The associating link is the same in each instance. Dew and rain, not distinguishable from the liquid substance of tears, are employed as indications of sorrow. A flash of surprise is the effect in the former case; a flash of surprise, and nothing more; for the nature of things does not sustain the combination. In the latter, the effects from the act, of which there is this immediate consequence and visible sign, are so momentous, that the mind acknowledges the justice and reasonableness of the sympathy in nature so manifested; and the sky weeps drops of water as if with human eyes, as "Earth had before trembled from her entrails, and Nature given a second groan."

Finally, I will refer to Cotton's "Ode upon Winter," an admirable composition, though stained with some peculiarities of the age in which he lived, for a general illustration of the characteristics of Fancy. The middle part of this ode contains a most lively description of the entrance of Winter, with his retinue, as "A palsied king," and yet a military monarch,—advancing for conquest with his army; the several bodies of which and their arms and equipments, are described with a rapidity of detail, and a profusion of fanciful comparisons, which indicate on the part of the poet extreme activity of intellect, and a correspondent hurry of delightful feeling. Winter retires from the foe into his fortress, where

—"a magazine
Of sovereign juice is cellared in;
Liquor that will the siege maintain.
Should Phœbus ne'er return again."

Though myself a water-drinker, I cannot resist the pleasure of transcribing what follows, as an instance still more happy of Fancy employed in the treatment of feeling than, in its preceding passages, the poem supplies of her management of forms:

"'Tis that, that gives the poet rage,
And thaws the gelly'd blood of age;
Matures the young, restores the old,
And makes the fainting coward bold.

It lays the careful head to rest,
Calms palpitations in the breast,
Renders our lives' misfortune sweet:

Then let the chill Sirocco blow,
And gird us round with fens of snow,
Or else go whistle to the shore,
And make the hollow mountains roar.

Whilst we together jovial sit
Careless, and crowned with mirth and
wit,
Where, though bleak winds confine us
home,
Our fancies round the world shall roam.

We'll think of all the Friends we know,
And drink to all worth drinking to;
When having drunk all thine and mine,
We rather shall want healths than wine.

But where Friends fail us, we'll supply
Our friendships with our charity;
Men that remote in sorrows live,
Shall by our lusty brimmers thrive.

We'll drink the wanting into wealth,
And those that languish into health;
The afflicted into joy; th' oppress
Into security and rest.

The worthy in disgrace shall find
Favour return again more kind,
And in restraint who stilled lie,
Shall taste the air of liberty.

The brave shall triumph in success,
The lovers shall have mistresses,
Poor unregarded Virtue, praise,
And the neglected Poet, bays.

Thus shall our healths do others good,
Whilst we ourselves do all we would;
For, freed from envy and from care,
What would we be but what we were?"

When I sat down to write this preface, it was my intention to have made it more comprehensive; but, thinking that I ought rather to apologize for detaining the reader so long, I will here conclude.

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